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# THE NAVAL MISCELLANY

## VOLUME VII

Edited by  
SUSAN ROSE

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This volume is dedicated to the memory of Alan Pearsall MA ISO,  
Custodian of Manuscripts at the National Maritime Museum  
and naval historian.

He was always a fount of wisdom and source of help to fellow students.  
His gentle presence and great courtesy are sorely missed.

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## PREFACE

Like its immediate predecessor, this seventh *Naval Miscellany* clearly reveals how wide ranging and varied were the responsibilities of British seamen in the service of the Crown. The period covered extends from the late thirteenth century, when there was nothing in existence which could truly be called a navy, to the second half of the twentieth century when the Royal Navy faced all manner of new challenges, including the possibility of nuclear war.

Contributions dealing with the earliest periods are concerned only with what are now thought of as home waters [I and II both dealing with campaigns against Scotland]. We move on to voyages to Iceland [III], in the Baltic [IV], and thereafter to the high seas in general. Even more than the ever wider geographical spread of naval activity, the topics covered show how deeply maritime affairs became woven into British life in time of peace as well as war. The ships of the Cinque Ports and the other harbours along the south and east coasts of England which transported Edward I's armies and their victuals and equipment to Scotland [I] were everyday merchantmen, many no larger than a modern yacht. Without their help the King's ambitious campaigns would have foundered. The documents printed also shed light on the shipping of the period, its design and construction and the number of vessels which could be pressed into royal service. Changes by the sixteenth century are made clear by comparing this contribution with that relating to Lord Lisle's expedition of 1544 [II]. The log of the voyage of the *Marigold* [III] just over a century later says much about contemporary seamanship and the way in which governments by then saw the fisheries as one of their legitimate concerns.

The voyages of the *Raven* and the *Investigator* [VI, VII] not only indicate the professionalism of the surveying and chart-making activities of the Hydrographic Office but also the value of those activities for the economic development of the areas concerned. The difficulties of organising such expeditions in areas little known at the time are vividly portrayed. However, the largest group of contributions is concerned with various aspects of the Royal Navy as a fighting force in the defence of the realm. These include the development of the law in relation to prizes

[IV], the search for suitable timber when the navy was indeed a 'wooden wall' [V], and the use of sailors as soldiers on occasion [VIII], in this case in the Zulu War of 1879. There are also examples of how the 'fog of war' can give rise to bitter or long-running disagreements [IX, XI] arising on the one hand from the handling of cordite on the battle cruiser HMS *Lion* at Jutland and on the other from the relief of Admiral North from Gibraltar in 1940. Two contributions [X, XII] deal largely with the development of the navy in Australia as an independent force with its own establishment. The second of these [XII] uses the correspondence between the First Naval Member in Australia and the First Sea Lord in London to illustrate the close relationship which grew between holders of these posts in 1947–59 almost entirely through the medium of letters.

From the contributions as a whole, a powerful sense emerges of the development of the Royal Navy as an institution, of its administration, and bureaucracy. Edward I relied largely on the obligation of all subjects to defend his kingdom to ensure the provision of the shipping he needed. The clerks employed to gather ships were those generally employed on royal business, working with sheriffs and leading townsmen. By 1544 the Navy Board had come into existence and administration gradually assumes a more modern bureaucratic form.

Some powerful personalities are also delineated in the contributions. Henry Eason, writing of the Zulu War in his diary [VIII], impresses as a careful and accurate observer attempting to use his expertise as a signaller in unfamiliar circumstances – trying to contact not a ship but a fort besieged by the Zulu forces in the South African *veldt*. The careful account by Alexander Grant [IX] of his employment as Gunner on *Lion*, including his participation in the Battle of Jutland, is a chapter taken from his autobiography and was written some time after the events. It includes, however, valuable detail of the methods he introduced for handling the loading of guns especially concerning the cordite charges. It leaves no doubt of his own professionalism and his awareness of the risks inherent in the system formerly employed on *Lion* and still in use at the time of the battle on other battle cruisers. The characters of Captain Thring [X] and the succession of Sea Lords and Australian First Naval Members whose letters appear in [XII] also emerge strongly.

As editor I am extremely grateful to the contributors who have given so generously of their time and expertise to produce this volume. I must also record the thanks of the Society to the staff of the libraries, particularly the British Library and The National Archives at Kew, who have been of great assistance to the contributors. I very much hope that the volume will be enjoyed by its readers and help to demonstrate the

place occupied by naval affairs in the history of the British Isles and the territories overseas to which British ships came.

Susan Rose



## ABBREVIATIONS

1SL, 2SL	1st Sea Lord, 2nd Sea Lord
1st Lord	First Lord of the Admiralty
ACNS	Assistant Chief of the Naval Staff
	(W): Weapons
Adm.	Admiral
Admy	Admiralty
Amb.	Ambassador
A. of F.	Admiral of the Fleet
APC	<i>Acts of the Privy Council</i>
A/S	Anti-Submarine
Asst.	Assistant
Atl. Fleet	Atlantic Fleet
b.	born
Bart	Baronet
BCS (1BCS, 2BCS)	Battle Cruiser Squadron (1st, 2nd)
BJSM	British Joint Services Mission
BL	British Library
BoC	Board of Control
BoT	Board of Trade
BS (1BS, 2BS)	Battle Squadron (1st, 2nd, etc.)
Capt.	Captain
CBE	Commander of the Order of the British Empire
Cdr	Commander
Cdre	Commodore
CEx.	Chancellor of the Exchequer
Chllr	Chancellor
C.-in-C.	Commander-in-Chief
Cmptrlr	Comptroller
CNS	Chief of the Naval Staff
Cntrlr	Controller
Comm.	Commissioner
Col.	Colonel
C. of S.	Chief of Staff
cr.	created

CS (1CS, 2CS, etc.)	Cruiser Squadron (1st, 2nd, etc.)
CSO	Chief Staff Officer
CSP	<i>Calendar of State Papers</i>
d.	died
DASD	Director of the Anti-Submarine Division
DCNS	Deputy Chief of the Naval Staff
DCOS	Deputy Chief of Staff
DGD	Director of Gunnery Division
Dir.	Director
Div (1st, 2nd, etc.)	Division (1st, 2nd, etc.)
DNI	Director of Naval Intelligence
DNO	Director of Naval Ordnance
d-o-b	date of birth
DPD	Director of Plans Division
DSB	Duty Steam Boat
DSO	Distinguished Service Order
	* and bar
dtr	daughter
edn	edition
Educ.	Education
FEO	Fleet Engineer Officer
FGO	Fleet Gunnery Officer
FO	Foreign Office
GCB	Knight Grand Cross (of the Order) of the Bath
Gen.	General
Gov.	Governor
HF	Home Fleet
HMC	Historical Manuscripts Commission
i/c	in command (1st, 2nd, etc)
inaug.	inauguration
Insp.	Inspector
KB	Knight of the Bath
KG	Knight of the Garter
Lt. Col.	Lieutenant Colonel
Lt. Gov.	Lieutenant Governor
m.	married
Med.	Mediterranean
Mid.	Midshipman
MN	Merchant Navy
MP	Member of Parliament
NA	Naval Attaché
NAWI	North America & West Indies Station

N. Am.	North America
NMM	National Maritime Museum
PM	Prime Minister
POW	prisoner of war
Pres.	President
RA	Rear-Admiral
ret.	retired
RNA	Royal Naval Academy
RNC	Royal Naval College
S. Atl. & Pac.	South Atlantic & Pacific Station
Sec.	Secretary
S. of S.	Secretary of State
S/M	Submarine
Sqdn (1st, 2nd, etc.)	Squadron (1st, 2nd, etc.)
TNA	The National Archives, Kew
UN	United Nations
USMC	United States Marine Corps
VA	Vice-Admiral
W. Apps	Western Approaches
W/T	Wireless Telegraphy
WI	West Indies
WO	War Office



# I

## THE PROVISION OF SHIPS FOR EDWARD I'S CAMPAIGNS IN SCOTLAND, 1300–1306: BARGES AND MERCHANTMEN

*Edited by*  
*Susan Rose*

Froissart's vivid descriptions of the discomforts of campaigning in Scotland and the absolute necessity of ensuring that the armies were properly supplied with victuals and all the other things needed provide the background to Edward I's concern with using the naval resources of his kingdom to supply his forces in Scotland. In 1327 Froissart wrote:

the men had to sleep in full armour, holding their horses by the bridles since they had nothing to tie them to, having left their equipment on the carts which could not follow them over such country. For the same reason there were no oats or other fodder to give the horses and they themselves had nothing to eat all that day and night except the loaves which they had tied behind their saddles and these were all soiled and sodden with the horses' sweat. They had nothing to drink but the water of the river ... they had no lights or fire and no means of kindling them.<sup>1</sup>

In 1298, at the siege of Falkirk, the English army had almost starved for lack of supplies;<sup>2</sup> clearly an army could not expect to live off the country in Scotland but must rely on all supplies being brought up from the south with transport by water being the most practical method.<sup>3</sup>

The documents printed here illustrate two aspects of the need to provide shipping to support campaigns in Scotland in the later years of Edward I's reign. First there are four accounts which give details of the building of vessels, usually called barges, for the king [1–4], and secondly there is a selection of writs and accounts which provide examples of the way in which shipping was arrested by the Crown for these campaigns and the

<sup>1</sup>Froissart, *Chronicles*, ed. G. Brereton (London, 1988), p. 49.

<sup>2</sup>F. J. Watson, *Under the Hammer: Edward I and Scotland, 1286–1306* (East Linton, 1998) pp. 65–6.

<sup>3</sup>W. S. Reid, 'Sea-power in the Anglo-Scottish War, 1296–1328,' *Mariner's Mirror*, 46, 1960, p. 8.

kind of problems which could arise [5–7]. All the documents come from the class of Exchequer Accounts Various (E101) at the National Archives at Kew.

Edward I had become involved in the affairs of Scotland after the death of Alexander III in a riding accident in 1286, leaving no direct heir except a young girl, Margaret, the Maid of Norway, his granddaughter. Her mother, also Margaret, who had been sent from Scotland to Norway to marry King Eric II, had died, probably in childbirth, leaving this little daughter as the only surviving direct descendant of Alexander, whose two sons had predeceased him. The child was eventually sent back to Scotland but died, probably on Orkney, in 1290 without ever seeing her realm. The succession to the throne of Scotland was then disputed among no fewer than 13 claimants. Edward I claimed feudal overlordship over Scotland and was called upon to arbitrate in the ‘Great Cause’, as it was known, in 1291.<sup>1</sup> He granted the throne to John Balliol, a collateral relative of Alexander III,<sup>2</sup> but this decision was not accepted by all the Scots nobility, especially the Bruce family who felt their claim to the throne, also as collaterals, was superior. Edward tried to enforce his overlordship on the Scottish lords but this aroused strenuous opposition among a section of the nobility. War began in earnest in 1297 following a revolt in Scotland, led principally by Robert Bruce and William Wallace, against what was seen as the imposition of English rule. Thereafter there were almost annual campaigns by the English in Scotland which met with varying success. Wallace was captured and executed in 1305 and briefly Edward seemed to have achieved his goal of making Scotland an English dependency. Bruce, however, rebelled on his own account in 1306 and Edward died in 1307 on his way north to mount yet another campaign to enforce his rule.<sup>3</sup>

In the absence of any clear evidence of the reasons for commissioning the vessels described in the documents translated here, it is hard to link them with any precise incident. The barges referred to in the following documents were built or rebuilt in 1299, ([1] two barges built at Hull and Ravenser), 1301 ([2] a ship with boats built at Conway), and 1304 ([3] a barge rebuilt at Great Yarmouth and [4] two barges re-built at Newcastle on Tyne). In two cases [3, 4] the writs ordering the construction of the vessels and stating specifically that they were intended for service in Scotland are also printed. In 1299, there was no major campaign and it

<sup>1</sup>M. Prestwich, *The Three Edwards: War and State in England, 1272–1377* (London, 2nd edn, 2003), pp. 39–41.

<sup>2</sup>The complicated genealogy of the Scots royal family is set out in the table ‘The Succession to the Scottish Throne’ in *ibid.*, pp. 270–71.

<sup>3</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 32.

may be that these vessels [1] were ordered in contemplation of the assault planned for the following year. In 1300 a large fleet was collected from all the east coast ports, while others were needed at Carlisle for an attack on the west of Scotland.<sup>1</sup> During this campaign, the English captured Caerlaverock Castle on the Solway Firth and the necessary siege engines were put in place by barges as the castle was very difficult to approach except by water. A poem, perhaps by an eye-witness gives a clear description of the castle's situation and includes the lines, 'Soon afterwards it fortunately happened/ that the navy arrived/ with the engines and provisions'.<sup>2</sup> In 1301, [2] similarly vessels were arrested from both the east and the west coasts ports.<sup>3</sup> Those ordered to congregate on the west coast were needed to bring troops from Ireland to Skinburness; the Welsh vessels would probably have been needed for the transport of men and supplies in confined waters. The campaign itself was ended by a truce with Edward making some progress towards his aim of convincing the Scots nobility to accept English rule. This success was built on in 1303 when English armies penetrated as far north as the Moray Firth. This campaign was preceded by careful preparations including the provision of pontoon bridges for river crossings. Edward also took care to take the Scots east coast ports including Montrose and Aberdeen so that his supply route was secure. Both he and his son spent the winter of 1303–04 in Scotland, Edward himself being based at Dunfermline. Negotiations for a permanent settlement of the wars with the recognition of English rule began in earnest in January 1304. The building of the barges mentioned in the documents printed here [3, 4] may have been ordered while the outcome of these talks was still very uncertain as discussed below.

All the vessels were equipped both with oars and sails and although no figures are given for their tonnage (always measured by capacity in terms of tuns of Bordeaux wine at this date) seem to have been quite small. The larger of the barges built at Yarmouth was intended to have 20 oars [3], and the Newcastle barge [4], 24. Forty-three oars were bought for the Hull barge [1] but some of these may also have been intended for the barge built at Ravenser, a port on Spurn Head washed away between 1339 and 1360. These vessels were all clinker built and probably resembled to some extent the ships depicted in the Bayeux Tapestry.

<sup>1</sup>Details of the payments to mariners for this campaign are in the Wardrobe Book for 1299–1300 edited by John Topsham for the Society of Arts in 1787. *Liber Quotidianus Contrarotulatoris Garderobae anno regis Edwardi primi vicesimo octavo*, ed. John Topsham (London, 1787).

<sup>2</sup>H. C. B. Rogers, 'The Siege of Caerlaverock Castle', *The Army Quarterly*, 73, 1957, p. 257.

<sup>3</sup>BL Add MSS 7966A, the Wardrobe Book for 1300–01, includes details of payments to mariners and ships' masters on ff. 119v–131v.

There is no clear indication in the documents of the intended use of the different craft. The writs relating to the building of the vessels in 1304 imply that the King was anxious for them to be delivered as quickly as possible. This is surprising to some extent as peace was concluded with the majority of the Scots in the spring of that year. There was therefore no campaign this year apart from the siege of Stirling castle which was successfully concluded in July 1304. The destination of the Newcastle barge was changed from St Andrews to Perth in February 1304 and the urgency for its delivery may reflect the uncertainties of the situation before the submission of the Scots to Edward was publicly made at a parliament held at St Andrews in March 1304. Most of the negotiations for this submission had in fact taken place in February at the time this writ was issued.<sup>1</sup> All these barges, which were intended to be fully armed and equipped for war, would have been very useful in the defence and supply of towns or castles accessible by water as well as for the transport of men and supplies. They could maintain communications, transport important persons and bring supplies perhaps of greater value than those carried by the arrested ships used for victuals for both men and horses.<sup>2</sup>

The second group of documents [5–7] relates largely to the collection and payment of merchant shipping arrested for ‘expeditions of war’ in the usual phrase employed. The documents chosen for transcription and publication relate to two major arrests of shipping: first, for the transport of the forces under the command of the Earl of Ulster from Ireland to the North West of England in 1303 [6]<sup>3</sup>; and, secondly, for an expedition in 1307 when Scotland was again in turmoil after Bruce’s murder of Sir John Comyn at Dumfries in December 1306 and the collapse of the peace concluded in 1304 [7].<sup>4</sup> The use of troops from Ireland was an important feature of the campaign of 1303–04 and had been the subject of a great deal of preparation. It has been stated that in order to transport the army to Scotland the largest fleet ever assembled in Ireland was needed. Only 37 of the fleet of 173 vessels were Irish, with many needing repairs or adaptation to be suitable for transporting horses. This involved the use of

<sup>1</sup>Full details of the events of 1304 in Scotland can be found in F. J. Warren, *Under the Hammer: Edward I and Scotland, 1286–1306* (East Linton, 1998), pp. 182–91.

<sup>2</sup>In 1301 arrested shipping bringing supplies from Ireland was ordered to transport wheat, oats, malt, peas and beans, wine (200 casks), salt, and fish. Reid, ‘Sea-power in the Anglo-Scottish war 1296–1328’, p. 9.

<sup>3</sup>The use of Irish troops in Edward I’s Scots war and their transport across the Irish Sea has been discussed in J. Lydon, ‘Edward I, Ireland and the war in Scotland, 1303–1304,’ in J. Lydon (ed.), *England and Ireland in the later middle ages: essays in honour of Jocelyn Othway-Ruthven* (Blackrock, 1981), pp. 43–61.

<sup>4</sup>Sir John Comyn of Badenoch junior shared the position of guardian of Scotland with Robert Bruce, but had a claim to the throne of Scotland in his own right and was seen by Bruce as blocking his own ambitions.

large quantities of hurdles which also had to be specially made for the purpose. The fleet left from Dublin Bay about the beginning of July 1303 and probably landed eventually near Largs.<sup>1</sup> In 1307 Edward's intention was, as before, to send one fleet to the west coast and another to the east coast but his death at Burgh-on-Sands on 6 July 1307 brought the campaign to an end.<sup>2</sup>

The accounts [6, 7] show clearly the differences in the treatment of shipping from the Cinque Ports compared with that from other places; the Cinque Ports not only had an obligation to serve the king for 15 days without payment but also to produce a standard number of men as crew. The numbers recorded for crew in the case of these ships often seem standardised with identical total payments recorded in the accounts in a way not apparent with vessels from elsewhere. With regard to the ships arrested for the transport of the Irish troops across the Irish Sea [6] it is usually assumed that those coming from ports in England would have first had to make the journey along the Channel coast and round Cornwall to reach the allotted rendezvous, Drogheda for example. It is also suggested that this first leg of the journey was at the expense of the towns concerned and was a considerable burden to place on them. However, it may be the case that the ships from Southern England were already in port in Ireland on commercial voyages and were unfortunate enough to be arrested before they could sail for home. This was certainly the case in the later fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. This account also includes some money spent on repairs to the arrested ships and on the freight charges for the transport of horses.

Document 5 consists of a file of writs addressed to a royal clerk, Peter of Dunwich, who was charged on various occasions with dealing with the problems caused by seaport towns failing to fulfil their obligation to send shipping to the king's assistance when requested. The file contains 12 items of which 10 have been included here. No. 6 in the file is a copy of 'no. 2, and no. 9 relates to the collection of corn in Fife for the King's army and has been omitted because it has no maritime content. Prestwich feels that from 1301 the king had increasing difficulties in recruiting ships for the Scottish wars. Some of these he relates to a dispute with the Cinque Ports over the wages paid once the 15 days voluntary service had expired. It is also the case that there was little chance of the lucrative capture of enemy shipping as prizes nor of profitable return cargoes once the King's supplies had been delivered as could be the case for shipping arrested to transport victuals or men to Gascony. Peter of Dunwich and his colleagues

<sup>1</sup>Lydon, 'Edward I, Ireland and the war in Scotland, 1303-4,' pp. 48-50.

<sup>2</sup>Reid, 'Sea-power in the Anglo-Scottish war, 1296-1328,' p. 13.

were faced with considerable reluctance to send shipping north when they set out to implement the king's commands in the summer of 1302 and later years.<sup>1</sup> These writs demand that backsliders should be punished but become vague as to how this was to be done.

These are not, of course, the only documents extant which relate to the arrest of shipping to carry supplies to Edward's armies. The Wardrobe Book for 1299–1300 which contains details of payments for ships used during the campaign of 1300 was published in 1787 by the Society of Antiquaries edited by John Topsham.<sup>2</sup> The Wardrobe Book for the following year is in the British Library<sup>3</sup> and there are other examples of similar documents in the class of Accounts Various of the Exchequer in the National Archives at Kew.<sup>4</sup> What is lacking is any clear information as to the employment of ships apart for their role in logistics. It seems certain that there was little if any fighting at sea in these campaigns.

Overall it is hoped that this small selection of documents conveys some of the methods used by medieval kings to collect together the supply vessels so necessary for their wars, particularly those against Scotland. As Prestwich states, 'the most important function of the navy was to provide transport' since only by sea could 'the huge quantities of victuals' be carried to the royal armies. In his view, 'the last word of praise must go to the ships themselves, the *Blithes*, *Garlandes*, *Godales* and *Marioles*, and even more to the men who sailed them, sometimes in the depths of winter, in support of the war effort'.<sup>5</sup>

### The System of Editing the MSS.

The great majority of the documents printed here were originally in Latin; one or two, usually writs, were in Norman French. All have been translated. This translation is fairly free especially when dealing with the highly repetitive nature of medieval 'official' Latin which relied extensively on the use of formulaic constructions. The names of technical terms in shipbuilding are in the vernacular in the original MSS and have been printed in italics with the meaning, where known, in the Glossary. All figures in the original are in Roman numerals; these have been

<sup>1</sup>M. Prestwich, *War, Politics and Finance under Edward I* (London, 1972), pp. 144–6.

<sup>2</sup>*Liber Quotidianus Contrarotulatoris Garderobae anno regis Edwardi primi vicesimo octavo*: pp. liv–lvi of the Introduction refer to the navy, and material relating to ships can be found on pp. 70, 72, 120 and 271–9 in the text.

<sup>3</sup>BL, Add. MSS 7966a, the Wardrobe Book for 1300–01: this has payments to ships' masters on ff.119v–131r.

<sup>4</sup>For example TNA, E101/5/28, E101/9/7, E101/10/29, E101/11/2, E101/13/13.

<sup>5</sup>Prestwich, *War, Politics and Finance*, p. 150.

changed to Arabic numerals; this applies both to sums of money and figures used in other ways.

If place names can be reliably identified they are printed in their modern form. If the identification is not certain or is unknown they are left in the spelling used in the original. The spelling of surnames has also been left as in the original. The names of a number of persons are in the form (first name) of (place name); in this case the place name is also modernised if identifiable. There are also occasional additions by the editor in square brackets in the text.

There are a certain number of corrections and omissions in the original MSS; these have been noted in footnotes. Marginal headings in the left hand margin have been incorporated into the text. Illegible or missing words have been indicated by ---? or ---.

### Glossary<sup>1</sup>

Blay	Also <i>blare</i> , a paste of hair and tar for caulking the seams of boats
Botswayn	Here a ship's boy, the least important member of the crew
Boynges	Weather boards, fixed above the gunwale to increase the freeboard of a ship
Brand	Topmost piece of the stem-post
Chop	Perhaps a block or wedge
Clayes	Unknown
Clavyng	Unknown
Cleta	Hurdle (Latin)
Clinker	Here a workman working on the hull
Copla	Here probably used of the shrouds as they came in twos or 'couples' (Latin)
'Fotynges	A variant form of <i>futock</i>
Gryves	Leg armour
Hechyng	Variants of <i>hatch</i> , at this date meaning deck <sup>2</sup>
Hecyng	As above
Hethys	Unknown: boards for a special purpose
Hurdyng	The palisade or bulwarks fitted to the waist of an oared ship; also used as wash boards

<sup>1</sup>The meanings given here follow either B. Sandahl, *Middle English Sea Terms* (3 vols, Upsala, 1951, 1956 and 1982), especially Vol. I *The Ship's Hull*, or Falconer's *Universal Dictionary of the Marine* (London, 1784), or R. E. Latham (ed.), *Revised Medieval Latin Word List* (London, 1965).

<sup>2</sup>Sandahl, I, pp. 190–91.

Hurdys	As above
Kevill	A frame composed of two pieces of timber with the upper ends branching out, fixed to the ship's side to belay the tacks and sheets extending the bottom of the mainsail
Lagen	A gallon vessel (Latin)
Lerynges	Stout blocks of wood acting as mast partners
Putokrynges	Sandahl debates the meaning of this word and associated terms and suggests that the puttocks were some kind of cleat or cheek which supported the top castle and also perhaps the upper ends of the shrouds. <sup>1</sup> It seems the word was later subsumed into the meaning of futtock
Rebator	A ship's carpenter; perhaps the equivalent of the <i>holder</i> of later accounts: <i>Oxford English Dictionary</i> has the meaning of 'rebate' = a wood working operation.
Roof	The rivets or small metal plates hammered over the ends of the clench nails in a clinker-built ship
Semenail	Seamnail, clench nail
Spikings	A spike or spike nail
Spurch	Sandahl states that this is of doubtful meaning; perhaps timber of a particular shape? <sup>2</sup>
Spurches	As above
Spurthes	As above
Stavens	Related to the stem
Stavens binding	As above
Sy	Thread spun from cows' hair placed between overlapping strakes in clinker-built vessels
Taig	Perhaps a Northern dialect measurement of length?
Tarr	Probably mistake for barrel of tar
Teldys	Awnings
Thoftes	Thwarts
Tryanke	Unknown, may relate to catting an anchor
Tynglenail	A small kind of nail
Wyngs	Variant of <i>Wrangs</i> , floor timber
Wilding	A kind of caulking material

<sup>1</sup>Sandahl, III, pp. 79–81.

<sup>2</sup>Sandahl, I, p. 91.

Would	Variant of <i>wole</i> , rope used to bind a spar or similar object
Wronges	<i>Wrangs</i> : floor timbers
Wynlews	Variant of Wynyngs below
Wynyngs or vynynges	Fully discussed in Sandahl; used in conjunction with the sails, possibly like a modern boltrope <sup>1</sup>
Yndawandas	Probably a blue pigment

## Part 1

### Accounts relating to the building of barges and other vessels for Edward I, in 1299, 1301 and 1303–4

#### 1. *The Building of Barges at Hull and Ravenser 1299*

[TNA, E 101/7/25]

A. [Latin]

Year 27<sup>2</sup>

Costs of the Hull barge.<sup>3</sup>

The same accounts for 14 pieces of timber for *spurches*<sup>4</sup> and *wronges*, 9 pieces of timber for *hecyng* bought for 4s 11d.

And for 9 large pieces of timber bought for *wales* and for *hurdys*. 9s.

And in 5 long boards for *boynges* bought for 6s 6d.

And in 100 boards bought for *hechyng* and *hurdyng* 15s.

And in 2000 nails bought for the same 2s 9d.

<sup>1</sup>The full discussion of this term can be found in Sandahl, II, pp. 130–35.

<sup>2</sup>Heading in the MS; 27 Edward I is Nov. 1298–Nov. 1299.

<sup>3</sup>In the margin in the MS.

<sup>4</sup>Unfamiliar shipbuilding terms are in the original spelling in italics; their meaning where known will be found in the Glossary.

And in 13 pieces of iron bought for ironwork and iron nails and making the same, 6s 6d.

And in pitch tar oil and greasing wax and rosin bought for the same 13s 3d.

And in 90 ells of canvas cloth bought for sails, 29s 4d.

And for making a sail 17s.

And in rope for the sail and *vyngnges* 4s 9d.

And in 49 pieces of canvas bought for awnings<sup>1</sup> 45s 4½d.

And in 43 new oars bought for 22s 8d.

And in *teldys* bought for covering the barge 24s.

And in 1 new anchor and an old anchor *putokrynges* to be mended 9s 3d.

And in wood and other things bought to support and prepare the barge 13½d.

And in the wages of 32 carpenters sawing timber for 1 day, 28 for another day, 28 for for 3 days, 13 carpenters for 4 days, 5 carpenters for 5 days, 5 carpenters for ½ day, each of whom took 4d per day, 36s 3d.

And in the wages of 3 carpenters working within the barge for 1 day 9d.

And in the wages of 1 man going on beyond the said time for 6 days 18d.

And in the wages of 1 sailing master, 1 constable each of whom took 6d per day and 28 sailors and ships boys each of whom took 3d per day for 15 days, £16.<sup>2</sup>

Total £27 14s 1d.

<sup>1</sup>Added over an omission mark to the MS.

<sup>2</sup>This sum seems wrong. Calculating the wages due produces the total of £6. The scribe may have accidentally repeated the x from the preceding Roman figure xv (15). The MS itself is quite clear at this point; the original reads 'xvi lib.'

**B. [Latin]**

Costs of the barge of Ravenser.<sup>1</sup>

The same accounts for timber for *stavens*, *fotynges*, *thoftes*, *lerynges*, *spurthes* bought for 30s 0½d.

And 87 boards bought for 19s 6d.

And 58 boards bought for *hethys* 7s 10½d.

And timber bought for the castle and *tryanke* 1 anchor 3s 4½d.

And 1200 *sennayl* and *roof* 300 spikes 1900 *tynglenail* bought together with 4 pieces of iron for *sennayl* and making the same, 22½d.

And 17 *lagens* tar 14 stone of pitch and 5 stone of *sy and blay* bought for the same 12s 10d.

And 1 mast bought with spars to repair the same 2s 8d.

And 1 *cleto* bought with *putokrynges* and 3 *chopis* bought 16d.

And *stavens binding*<sup>2</sup> 2d

And 1 sail with sail thread for the same bought for 22s 6d.

And in 2 anchors bought with ropes and *wynyngs* ---? 3d.

And in the wages of various men bringing the barge from Wassra to the shore 2s 3d.

And the wages of Henry Holland carpenter by agreement 10s.

<sup>1</sup>In the margin in the MS. Ravenser or Ravenserod, as it was sometimes known, was situated at the extreme end of Spurn Point at the entrance to the Humber. In the early fourteenth century it was a successful trading port with borough status and a merchant fleet of perhaps as many as a hundred ships. Its site, however, was very vulnerable to erosion by the action of the wind and the tide and by the 1340s was suffering badly from flooding. The town was finally abandoned to the sea in 1360 with its inhabitants dispersed to neighbouring communities.

<sup>2</sup>The MS is damaged at this point; figures possibly missing.

And in the wages of 1 carpenter for 4 days at a rate per day of 6d. and various carpenters for 44 days working at various times each taking per day 5d 20s 4d.

And in the wages of 1 carpenter for 13 days, 1 carpenter for 12 days, 2 carpenters for 4 days, and 2 carpenters for 3 days each at 4d per day, 13s.

And in the wages of 2 carpenters for 13 days 1 carpenter for 12 days each at 3d per day 10s 6d.

And in the wages of 2 carpenters for 12 days each at 2d per day, 4s.

And in the wages of 1 man over and above the said carpenters for 21 days per day 3d. 5s 3d.

And in the wages of 1 master mariner and 1 constable each at 6d per day and 24 sailors and ships boys each at 3d per day for 40 days. £14.

Total £24 8s. 3d.

Overall total for 2 barges £52 2s. 4d.

## 2. *The Building of a Ship with attendant Boats at Conway in the summer of 1301*

[TNA, E101/9/27, Latin]

Concerning the works of a certain ship and certain boats at Conway undertaken by order of the Lord Prince<sup>1</sup> from Sunday 7th May in the abovesaid year to dates as below.

Sunday 14th May in the 29th year of the reign of King Edward.

To Richard Morteth one of a group of 14 English and Welsh carpenters working in the woods in Lancashire to fell timber for the said ship: the said Richard receiving 3s 6d per week, each of 4 others 2s 4d, 2 others 2s 2d, another 2, 18d, and 5, 14d each, for their pay from Sunday 7th May to Sunday abovesaid to wit for 1 week.

25s 8d

<sup>1</sup>This title is a formality because Conway was within the Principality.

On the same day for the expenses of 6 carpenters of the aforesaid group coming from Chester to Conway for the work on building the same ship 6s, to wit to each of them 12d

And for the carriage of their tools 6d

On the same day to Richard Leytelone and Adam of Wirleye attending on the same workers each receiving 18d per week as their pay for the same period. 3s

Total 35s 2d.

Sunday 21st May in the above year.

To Richard Morteth one of a group of 20 English and Welsh carpenters working in the same place – 1 of them receiving 3s 6d per week, each of 4 others 2s 4d, 3 others 2s, 3 others 18d, 1 16d, 1 15d, 4 12d, 3 10d, and 1 9d as their pay from Sunday 14th May to Sunday abovesaid, to wit for 1 week. 31s 2d

On the same day to Adam of Wirleye and Richard Leytelone attending on the said workers each receiving 18d per week for their pay 3s for the same period.

Total 34s 1d

Sunday 28th May in the above year.

To Richard Morteth one of a group of 26 English and Welsh carpenters working in the same place 1 of them receiving 3s 6d per week, 1 15d, each of 4 14d, both of 2 13d, both of 2 12d, each of 3 9d, 1 8d, 1 7½d, each of 6 6d, each of 3 5d, and both of 2 4½d for their pay from Sunday 21 May to the abovesaid day to wit for 1 week. 22s 1½d

On the same day to Eignon Vaughan one of 5 colleagues labourers dragging and transporting timber thither each of 4 receiving 3d per week and 1 2½d as pay for that, 14½d

The same day to Adam of Wirleye and Richard Leytelond attending to the said workers both of them receiving 18d per week as their pay for the same period. 3s.

Total 26s 4d.

Sunday 4th June in the above year.

To Richard Morteth one of a group of 26 English and Welsh carpenters working there 1 of them receiving 3s 6d per week, another 2s 6d, each of 4 2s 4d, both of 2 2s 2d, both of 2 2s, each of 3 18d, 1 16d, 1 15d, each of 6 12d, each of 3 10d, and both of 2 9d, for their pay from Sunday 28th May to the above Sunday to wit for 1 week. 40s 9d

The same day to Eignon Vaughan one of 14 labourers working there each receiving 6d per week as their pay which makes 7s.

The same day to Roger the smith one of 3 smiths working at Beaumaris<sup>1</sup> on a certain anchor made for the said ship 1 of them receiving 2s per week both of 2 18d for their pay for the same period. 5s.

The same day to William Cosin and the nailers making the boat for the said ship 1 of them receiving 18d per week, 1 16d, 1 15d and 1 10d as their pay for the same period. 4s 8d.

The same day to Adam of Wirleye and Richard Leytelond attending the same workers each receiving 18d per week as pay for the same period. 3s.

Total 40s 5d.

Sunday 11th June in the above year.

To Richard Morteth one of 15 fellow English and Welsh carpenters working there, 1 of them receiving 3s 6d per week, another 2s 6d, each of 4 2s 4d, each of 3 18d, and each of 6 12d, as their pay from Sunday 4th June to the Sunday above to wit for 1 week 25s.

The same day to Eignon Vaughan for the carriage of timber from the woods to the waterside for stacking, 24s

The same day to Roger the smith one of 3 smiths working at Beaumaris on making a certain anchor for the said ship 1 of them receiving 2s per week both of 2 18d for their pay for the same period, 5s.

The same day to Roger of Lewes and Richard Purling for taking the timber by water by Trenery and Thlanrust<sup>2</sup> to Conway on 4 occasions, 24s 8d.

<sup>1</sup>The MS uses the Latin name *Bello marisco*; this has been identified as Beaumaris.

<sup>2</sup>Llanwrst; the timber was being brought down the river to Conway. Trenery cannot be identified.

The same day to Ralph of Chester a carpenter for 400 boards made for the same ship 14s that is at 3s 6d per hundred.

The same day to Reginald le Portour for the carriage of the said boards and other parcels of timber by water from Trenery and Thlanrust to Conway, 6s 8d

The same day for the carriage of all the said timber and said boards to the boats and from the boats to the shore at Conway, 5s 10d.

The same day to Adam of Wirleye and Richard Leytelond attending the same workers both at 18d per week for their pay for the same period, 3s.

Total 113s 8d.

Sunday 18th June in the above year

To Richard Morteth one of 6 English carpenters working on the same ship, 1 of them receiving 3s 6d per week, both of 2 2s 4d, and each of 3 2s, for their pay from Sunday 11th June to the Sunday above to wit for 1 week, 14s 2d.

The same day to 16 labourers dragging the timber in the wood from one place to another each receiving 1d per day for their pay for 5 days within the same period, 6s 8d.

The same day to 35 labourers launching the great barge of the Lord King at Beaumaris each of them receiving 1½d per day for 1 day within the same period, 4s 4d.

The same day for bringing the same barge from Beaumaris to Conway, 4s 8d

The same day to Roger of Lewes and Ralph Purling for bringing 4 boatloads of timber from Wraget to Conway, 14s. to wit for each boatload 3s 6d.

The same day to William Cosin one of 4 nailers nailing the boat made for the same ship, 1 of them receiving 18d per week, 1 16d, 1 12d, and 1 10d for their pay for the same period, 4s 8d.

The same day to Adam of Wirleye and Richard Leytelone for attending to the same workmen both of them receiving 18d per week for the same period, 3s.

Total 51s 6½d

Sunday 25th June in the above year.

To Richard Morteth one of 6 English carpenters working on the same ship 1 of them receiving 3s 6d per week, both of 2 2s 4d, and each of 3 2s, for their pay from 18th June to the above Sunday to wit for 1 week, 14s 2d.

The same day to Stephen Isylyn one of 15 fellow Welsh carpenters working in the wood to shape timbers for the same ship, 1 of them receiving 18d per week, 1 16d, 1 15d, each of 6 12d, each of 4 10d, and both of 2 9d for their pay for the same period. 14s 11d.

The same day to Eignon Vaughan 1 of 10 labourers working there to move timber each of them receiving 1d per day for 4 days within the same period.<sup>1</sup>

The same day to William Cosin 1 of 4 fellow nailers nailing the boat made for the same ship 1 of them receiving 18d per week, 1 15d, 1 12d, and 1 10d, as their pay for the same period. 4s 8d.

The same day to Adam of Wirlye and Richard Leytelone attending the workmen both receiving 18d per week for their pay for the same period. 3s

Total 40s 1d.

Sunday 2nd July in the above year.

To Richard Morteth 1 of 6 fellow English carpenters working on the same ship 1 receiving 3s 6d per week, both of 2 2s 4d, and each of 3 2s for their pay from Sunday 25th June to the Sunday above to wit for 1 week.

14s 2d.

The same day to Howell Gough 1 of 14 fellow Welsh carpenters working in the wood to shape timber for the same ship 1 of them receiving 18d per week, 1 16d, 1 15d, each of 4 14d, each of 6 13d and 1 10d for their pay for the same period. 16s 1d.

<sup>1</sup>Total [10d] omitted.

The same day to Ithel Gough of a group of 10 helping the workmen working there to move timber each of them receiving 1d per day as their pay for 5 days in the same period. 4s 2d

The same day to William Cosin 1 of 4 nailers nailing the boat made for the said ship 1 receiving 18d per week, 1 16d, 1 12d, and 1 10d for their pay for the same period. 4s 8d.

The same day to Adam of Wirleye and Richard Leytelone attending on the same workmen both of them receiving for their pay 18d per week for the same period. 3s

Total 42s 0d.

Sunday 9th July in the above year.

To Richard Morteth 1 of 5 English carpenters working on the same ship 1 of them receiving 3s 6d per week, both of 2 2s 4d and each of 2 2s, for their pay from the said 2nd July to the above Sunday to wit for 1 week. 12s 2d

The same day to Howell Gough 1 of 14 Welsh carpenters working in the wood to shape timber for the same ship 1 of them receiving 18d per week, 1 16d, 1 15d, each of 4 14d, and each of 6 13d and 1 10d, for their pay for the same period. 16s 1d.

The same day to Ithel Gough 1 of 10 men assisting the workmen working there to move timber each receiving 1d per day for their pay for 5 days within the same period. 4s 2d.

The same day to William Cosin 1 of 4 nailers nailing the boat made for the said ship 1 of them receiving 18d per week, 1 16d, 1 12d, and 1 10d for their pay for the same period. 4s 8d.

The same day to Roger le Porter and Richard Purling for bringing 4 boatloads of timber from Wraget to Conway for the same ship 16s, to wit 4s per boatload.

The same day to Adam of Wirleye and Richard Leytelone attending on the same workmen both of them receiving 3s [*sic*] per week for their pay for the same period. 3s

Total 56s 1d.

Sunday 16th July in the above year

To Richard Morteth 1 of 5 English carpenters working on the same ship  
1 of them receiving 3s 6d per week, both of 2 2s 4d, and each of 2 2s for  
their pay from Sunday 9th July to the above Sunday for 1 week.

12s 2d.

The same day to Howell Gough 1 of 14 Welsh carpenters working in the  
wood to shape timber for the said ship 1 of them receiving 18d per week,  
1 16d, 1 15d, each of 4 14d and each of 6 13d, 1 10d, for their pay for the  
same period.

16s 1d

The same day to Ithel Gough 1 of 10 men helping the workmen working  
there to move timber each of them receiving 1d per day for their pay for  
5 days in the same period.

4s 2d.

The same day to William Cosin 1 of 4 nailers nailing the boat made for  
the said ship 1 of them receiving 18d per week, 1 16d, 1 12d, and 1 10d,  
for their pay for the same period.

4s 8d.

The same day to Adam of Wirleye and Richard Leytelone each of them  
receiving 18d per week for their pay for the same period.

3s.

Total 40s 1d.

Sunday 23rd July in the above year

To William de Grassington a smith for 800 large nails with all the rivets  
for making the said ship 24s to wit for each hundred

3s.

To the same William for 550 lesser nails for making the same ship 8s 3d  
to wit for each hundred

18d.

To William of Wirhal a smith for making 600 nails for the boat of the  
same ship 7s 6d to wit for each hundred

15d.

Total 39s 9d.

The above Sunday to William of Doncaster for 12 stone of wax bought  
from him for the same ship 12s price per stone

12d.

To the same William for 23½ stones of pitch bought from him for the  
same ship 23s 6d price per stone

12d.

The same day to Robert le Carboner for 2 dozen pounds of iron bought  
for the same 2s 4d.

The same day to Roger Garlegg for *kevill* bought from him for the said  
ship. 2s

The same day to Eignon ap Thuder for moving stores to the shore. 6d

The same day to Roger of Nerforlon for 1½ stone of pitch bought from  
him 21d price per stone 14d.

To the same Roger for rosin bought from him for the said boat 17d.

The same day to Lulley a carpenter for 32 large boards bought from  
him 8s. (price per board 3d)

The same day to Roger le Mercer for small nails bought from him for the  
said ship 4s 2½d.

The same day to the same Roger for wax bought from him for the same  
boat, 18d

Total 57s 2½d

Overall total of the said particulars for the said works on the said ship  
£29 16s

### 3. *The rebuilding of two old barges for the King at Great Yarmouth in 1304*

{TNA, E101/12/6}

A. Writ 1<sup>1</sup> [Norman French]

Walter by the grace of God Bishop of Chester and Treasurer of our Lord  
the King to the Bailiffs of the town of Yarmouth greetings and good  
wishes.

Since you have assured us that you are willing to build the two barges  
which Robert Dynelyn came to look for, because our Lord the King has

<sup>1</sup>This and the second writ are sewn in at the head of the account roll.

this much at heart needing them for a thousand tasks, if you loyally produce them in good faith you will be paid between now and Easter at the latest for all manner of expenses which you incur on these barges and on all other things appertaining to them.

And because we are asking you much in advance as we know and provided you have these needs at heart as the King has them at heart and that you take pains that the needs are met quickly and to the benefit of the king as you desire we will keep you in mind in that the King has been provided by your loyal care.<sup>1</sup>

Given by the Bishop at York on 25th January

**B. Writ 2 [Latin]**

Edward by the grace of God King of England, Lord of Ireland and Duke of Aquitaine, to the bailiffs and certain burgesses of his town of Great Yarmouth greetings.

WE order you that at once having once seen these letters and with all delays and excuses forgotten you should provide for our business two barges of which one should have at least twenty oars and that the same barges should be prepared and protected equipped with bulwarks and other fortifications with which they may be better defended and fortified and in the same should be well chosen armed mariners and other men sufficient for the safekeeping and defence of the same barges who should be strong, robust and well armed. To the effect that the said barges so prepared and fortified should come at the next opportunity to us at Dunfermline to then do what will be ordered for the expedition.

Knowing for certain that from the next moneys which for our business will be levied as a tax in the said town which has already been authorised in two instalments for our whole kingdom you will receive payment and an allocation for the cost incurred in providing the same.

Regarding this we are sending our favoured servant Robert Dynelyn to you to ensure that this provision goes forward with as much haste as possible moreover the same Robert has been strongly instructed lest any delay on your behalf should protract the time of completion. Wherefore the said barges, prepared and fortified as aforesaid should set out at the next suitable wind to join us and when they have set out your diligence concerning this and your loyalty and merit which we have often

<sup>1</sup>The Bishop is implying that, although they have been asked to build these ships at their own expense, their loyal assistance to the king will be remembered.

experienced up till now will be recommended to our venerable father the bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, our treasurer. Given at York 24th January in the 32nd year of our reign; by privy seal.

C. Account for the building of the barges; lower section of an indenture. [Latin]

Bailiffs and burgesses of the town of Great Yarmouth.

The account set out and delivered in the presence of Robert Dunelm, Justice of the Exchequer of the Lord King concerning two barges bought and prepared for Scotland in the 32nd year of King Edward, son of King Henry III at Great Yarmouth by order of the aforesaid King himself.

Item:

Purchase of one barge without equipment	62s. 8d.
Purchase of one smaller barge without equipment	40s.
Timber for preparing the barges	33s. 6d.
Boards of Ireland and pine	28s. 6d.
Bulwarks and necessities for the bulwarks	17s 6d.
Iron and the working of iron for the same barges	16s 10½d.
Wages of 6 carpenters for 6 days in the first week	12s.
Wages of 12 carpenters for 6 days in the second week (to wit each carpenter at 4d. per day)	24s.
For 2 watchmen for the works and other necessities for the said barges for 15 days	4s.
Wages of 6 <i>clinkers</i> for 5 days in the first week	7s. 6d.
Wages of 6 <i>rebaters</i> for the same number of days in the same week	6s.
Wages of 6 <i>clinkers</i> for 6 days in the second week	9s.
Wages of 6 <i>rebaters</i> for the same 6 days in the same week (to wit each <i>clinker</i> at 3d. per day and each <i>rebatar</i> at 2d. per day.)	3s.
Oil, rosin, pitch and wax	13s.
4 anchors	19s. 2d.
2 masts and 2 yards for the masts and 4 spars	16s. 6d.
To repair the same	17s.
For awnings to keep the same dry	28s.
55 oars	38s.
2 cables, 2 for the anchors and other ropes	37s 1½d.
2 sails and <i>wynlews</i> and the necessary rigging and repair of the same	39s.
To paint the said barges	5s. 3d.

4 streamers <sup>1</sup>	6s.
Arms as in ---? <sup>2</sup> and <i>grýves</i>	15s 1d.
Wages of 2 masters and other mariners to bring them into port	36s. 7d.
Wages of 46 sailors with the masters of the said barges for one month to wit beginning to be on the king's wages the Tuesday after the feast of St Peter <i>in cathedra</i> [22 February] in the thirty second year of King Edward son of King Henry	£16 16s.

To wit each sailor at 4d. per day, and each master at 12d. per day.

Overall total £42 5s.

Endorsed Bailiffs and burgesses of Yarmouth year 32.

4. *Writs and an account relating to the re-building of a barge at Newcastle on Tyne*

[TNA, E101/11/28]

A. Writ 1<sup>3</sup> [Norman French]

Edward by the grace of God King of England Lord of Ireland and Duke of Aquitaine: to the mayor and bailiffs of Newcastle of Tyne greetings. We recently ordered you in other letters that you should make efforts to deliver to us the barge which you had equipped for our expedition at our command; know that we have changed our will and desire on this and you are ordered that the same barge with all its equipment should be sent to us at the town of St Andrews as quickly as you can. It should be with us at the said town within next Eastertide at the latest, with a basic crew and at the least cost possible, so that there are no more men than are needed for the sailing of the same barge. When you have done this or will do it inform us by the bearer of this letter. The costs which you may incur will be duly allowed on your account.

Given under the Privy Seal at the town of St Andrews 16th March in the 32nd year of our reign.

Endorsed: Barge: this writ received 22nd March for the barge.

<sup>1</sup>This reading is uncertain as the MS is very rubbed at this point.

<sup>2</sup>Two items are illegible here; probably items of personal armour.

<sup>3</sup>This is the order of the items in the original MS.

**B. Writ 2 [Latin]**

Edward by the grace of God King of England, Lord of Ireland and Duke of Aquitaine to the mayor and bailiffs of Newcastle of Tyne greetings.

WE order you as a mark of our special favour that on the sight of these presents you should cause to be made as fast as possible one barge for us equipped with 24 oars and when this has been made it should be sent, with suitable arms and equipment for 26 men to the port of St John of Perth delivering the same barge to the said men with their expenses for one month.

And we will have funds allocated to you for the expenses and costs which are due for this provision at the Exchequer. By the king in person at Dunfermline 10th February in the 32nd year of the reign

Endorsed By the King; the Treasurer, the bishop of Coventry and Lichfield; 3rd March 32nd year the writ for the barge.

**C. [Latin]**

The Costs incurred for making a ---<sup>1</sup> barge by order of the lord king to the bailiffs of the town of Newcastle on Tyne 3rd February 32nd year of King Edward.

**Timber<sup>2</sup>**

To John de Bradfield for the purchase of his barge from which the new barge should be made.	40s.
---	------

Adam de Bradburn for timber and some nails bought from him at various times.	4s 1d.
--	--------

Robert Cokilberd and Adam Schepe for timber.	2s 4d.
--	--------

Master Roger de Hecham and John de la Gore for timber.	2s 3d.
--	--------

Hugo Taverner and Stephen Cox for timber.	3s
---	----

John Reynkok for timber.	22d.
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<sup>1</sup>A word is missing because of damage to the MS., probably 'new'.

<sup>2</sup>In the margin in the MS.

Henry Sparrow for timber.	2s 11d.
Roger Peytesin for timber for 6 <i>wrangs</i> .	18d.
William Porter for timber.	2s 6d.
Robert Niccibechehay for timber.	2s 9d.
Simon Jade from the manor of Selby and Ancilla Gilby of Redehough for timber bought from the same.	2s 7d.
Thomas Molendinar and Laurence Carpenter and William Russell for timber and 500 treenails.	5s 1d.
Various men of Gateshead for timber bought from the same for the carpenters.	16s
Total £4 6s 6d.	
Boards <sup>1</sup>	
Adam of Alnemouth for 1 plank and 14 boards.	4s 6d.
Adam of Galeway for 360 boards shaped for bulwarks for the said barge.	10s 6d.
Richard Tunnock, Richard of Riplington and Andrew Staket and Luce of Redenesse for 5 boards.	5s.
Walter of Congate for 20 boards Gilbert of Redehough for 14 boards Andrew of Leith for 4 boards and Stephen Trotand for 6 boards, price each 3d.	thus total 11s.
John Raynkok for 40 boards.	8s 10d.
John Haccher for 4 boards.	8d.
Total 37s 6d.	

<sup>1</sup>In the margin in the MS.

Iron<sup>1</sup>

To Walden of Qwhitonstall and Robert of Bingfeld for 12 pieces of iron price per piece 4d bought for the rudder and binding *brandis* including the smiths' work receiving 2d. per piece. 3s.

Nails<sup>2</sup>

John Hacchet for 800 *semenails* price per hundred 15d. thus total, 10s

Adam Smith, Spensidirobin wife of John of Soureby, John of Sihale and John Hacchet for 1060 *spiknigg* price per 100 6d, thus total 5s 3d.

The aforesaid Adam, and Spensidirobin wife of John of Soureby, John and John for 2900 prepared nails, price per 100 1½d thus total 3s 7½d

Overall total 24s 10½.

Pitch and Wax<sup>3</sup>

To Wilfred Carnisc and Robert Lemman for 7 pieces of wax, price per piece 8d. bought for greasing the barge. 4s 8d.

Bartholomew Ternage<sup>4</sup> and Andrew Skaket and Walter Tourblanc and Roger of Kingston and Mariot of Seleby for pitch and wax with 2 coffers of rosin for greasing the barge inside and out. 27s.

William de Benewell for 1 stone pitch. 20d.

Thomas Ward for *wilding*. 16d.

For pots for preparing the wax and *?aplettis*<sup>5</sup> 11d.

Total 35s 7d.

<sup>1</sup>In the margin in the MS.

<sup>2</sup>In the margin in the MS.

<sup>3</sup>In the margin in the MS.

<sup>4</sup>There is some damage to the MS at this point.

<sup>5</sup>The first letter of this word has been corrected in such a way that it is not legible.

Parcels<sup>1</sup>

John de Bradefeld for 1 mast for the barge and 1 old sail.	6s.
Gilbert Redehough for 1 mast.	3s.
John Raynekok for 1 spar for the barge.	19d.
Gilbert Flemeng for 62 ells canvas for sails.	13s 9d.
John Rouchse for <i>Wynges</i> for the sail.	2s 3d.
Willimam Schep for 1 rope with 50 <i>taig</i> for the sail.	5d.
John Lenge for 2 ropes for shrouds for the mast.	21d.
Gilbert Specer for 2 ropes for sheets.	18d.
William de Branton for 1 rope for 2 shrouds for the mast.	16d.
Alice Bedware for sail thread.	4d.
Richard Wasebayne of Fer for 2 ---? canvas.	6s 8d.
John Crowe for 2 ropes for stays.	2s.
To the same for sail thread.	4d.
John of Scheles for 1 white hauser length 57 <i>taig</i> .	15s.
For 3 anchors 1 ready <sup>2</sup>	
Roger of Hecham for 25 oars price each 9d.	20s 10d
Luce de Redenesse for 1 lock.	10d.
The same for 1 <i>tarr</i>	4d.
Sponsidirobin for 1 hammer.	2d.

<sup>1</sup>In the margin in the MS.<sup>2</sup>No sum of money in the MS.

Gilbert le Specer for 2 <i>spurch</i>	4d.
Thomas Norais for 1 brass pot and 1 cauldron with their chains.	4s 10d.
Thomas of Tynedale for 2 banners patched with the King's arms.	18s
John de Rouchse for 1½ ells of red serge for streamers and 3 ells for 2 awnings.	13½d.
John ---? <sup>1</sup> for 3 poles for the streamers and banners.	12d.
Total £6 3s 2 ½d.	
Colours	
John Crowe for 2 pieces of red lead.	12d.
The same for 1 pound of vermillion.	2s 2d.
The same for 1 pound of orpiment. <sup>2</sup>	16d.
The same for ½ pound of <i>yndawandas</i> <sup>3</sup>	8d.
John Thorand for 1 pound of varnish.	22d.
Richard Peyton for ½ pound oil.	3d.
Thomas Fuller for <i>wauld</i> and tubs bought from the same for colouring parts of the said barge.	9d.
Total 7s 2d.	

<sup>1</sup>Surname is missing through damage to the MS.

<sup>2</sup>A gold-coloured pigment; it is unlikely to have been gold leaf in view of the cost.

<sup>3</sup>This pigment was also found in the account for building a galley at Newcastle discussed by Tinniswood in his article (J. T. Tinniswood, 'English Galleys 1272–1377', *The Mariner's Mirror* 35, 276–315). He tentatively suggested it meant 'foreign blue'. The term *ind* is also found in the accounts of the repair of galleys at Bayonne for Edward II in 1320 (S. Rose, 'The Bayonne Galleys', in M. Duffy (ed.), *Naval Miscellany* VI, 2003, p. 28).

## Wages.

The Sunday next before the feast of St Peter in cathedra, which is 22nd February, for the pay of Walter Fleming, Thomas Ward and William de Wayneflele for 6 days each of them receiving 5d. per day. Total 7s 6d.

The wages of 6 other carpenters assisting the abovesaid carpenters for the same period each receiving 2d. per day. 6s.

The wages of Thomas Melle, Simon Bone and Peter Horner for the same period each receiving 4d. per day. 6s.

The wages of 2 labourers carrying timber and board for the same period each receiving per day 1½d. 18d.

Total 21s.

The Sunday next after the feast of St Peter in cathedra, for the wages of Laurence Carpenter, William de Wayneflele, Alexander Carpenter, Robert Scot, and Thomas Ward for 5 days each of them receiving 5d. per day. 10s 5d.<sup>1</sup>

The wages of Roger Scherer and his boy for 3 days receiving 8d. per day. 2s.

The wages of Peter Horner Henry Jervois Thomas Ward Richard Kelp Adam Sket and Walter Carpenter for 5 days each receiving 3d per day. 3s 3d.

William Flaket for greasing the barge at the cauldron. 20d.

2 labourers carrying timber where it was required for the work on the barge each receiving 1½d per day. 5d.

Total 21s 7d.

<sup>1</sup>Added to the MS over an omission mark.

[Dorse of MS]

Palm Sunday for the wages of William of Wayneflete and his 2 boys, Thomas Ward and his 2 boys, Walter Fleming and his 2 boys, each receiving for himself and the boys 9d per day for 6 days. 13s 6d.

The wages of John Melle Simon Bone Peter Horner and Richard of Lancaster for the same period each of them receiving 3d. per day 6s.<sup>1</sup>

The wages of 2 labourers receiving as above for the same period. 18d.

Total 21s<sup>2</sup>

Saturday the eve of Easter, for the wages of William de Wayneflete and his 2 boys Thomas Ward and his 2 boys Walter Fleming and his 2 boys for 5 days each receiving 9d per day for himself and the boys. 11s 3d.

The wages of Thomas Melle Peter Horner Simon Bone and Richard of Lancaster for the same period each receiving 3d. per day. 5s.

Total 16s 3d.

In Easter week for the wages of Thomas Ward William de Wayneflete Laurence Carpenter Alexander Carpenter and Robert Scot for 3 days, Robert Sotheran and Adam of Richmond for 1 day each receiving 5d. per day, thus total 7s 1d.

The wages of Richard Painter, John his assistant and Richard of Marscham painting the barge to wit for the said Richard receiving 8d per day for 2 days, the same John and Richard each receiving 6d per day for 6 days, thus total 7s 6d.

Reginald Bleston for 11 ells of canvas intended for the sail, 2s 6d.

<sup>1</sup>4s 6d. crossed out in the MS.

<sup>2</sup>19s 6d. crossed out in the MS.

John Armston for making the sail and streamers and for dyeing the 11 ells of canvas, 2s 6d.

Stephen Gee for the rent of his store where the timber and board were stored for the whole time that the barge was being made, 2s.

Total 12s 10d.

Total costs of the barge £20 15s<sup>1</sup>

To Adam of Redenesse for his wages and 9 sailors setting out in the said barge to Scotland for <sup>72</sup> the first day counted, 26s 1d.

Overall total £22 13s<sup>3</sup>

## Part 2

### Documents relating to the arrest of ships for war service, 1301–4

5. *A file of writs relating to the problems of collecting ships for service with the king in Scotland and other matters addressed to Peter of Dunwich<sup>4</sup> and others.*

[TNA, E101/10/21]

#### A. Writ 1 [Latin]

Edward by the grace of God King of England, Lord of Ireland and Duke of Aquitaine, to his favoured and loyal servants Peter of Chalons and Peter of Dunwich, greetings.

<sup>1</sup>13s 6d. crossed out in the MS.

<sup>2</sup>Number of days missing through damage to the MS.

<sup>3</sup>£21 19s 7d. crossed out in the MS.

<sup>4</sup>Peter of Dunwich was a royal clerk who was heavily involved in the logistics of the campaigns in Scotland. He was involved on more than one occasion in the purveyance of large quantities of foodstuffs for the army from all over eastern England as well as in the collection of ships. He was also appointed escheator for lands potentially forfeit to the king on the death of their holder in southern Scotland and the Borders. He was in fact a Suffolk man with lands in Dunwich. See Calendar of Patent Rolls (CPR), 1292–1301, pp. 313, 406, 475, 485, 578, 583, 588; CPR, 1301–7, pp. 75, 128.

Although the communities and towns of Teignmouth, Plymouth and Fowey granted a certain number of well-armed ships, to wit one from each of the said towns, lately at our request, to assist our war in Scotland, however the communities have not sent these ships of which in our aforesaid expedition of war we hoped to have had great help, as was promised to our great contempt and the manifest delay of our expedition aforesaid. Wishing, therefore, that so great a contempt should not be left unpunished we assign you to discover all those from the said communities and towns who promised to come whether men or ships in our said war to provide service to us in respect of this provision and did not come to us whether men or ships, provided that was not on account of ill health, and should be punished for their disservice and more fully inform us of this.

And so we order you on certain days and in certain places to set out the provision needed and we order the sheriffs of Devon and Cornwall and all the bailiffs and loyal subjects of the same counties within the liberties as without to provide the assistance, answers, counsel and help necessary to do this on our behalf.

In which matter these our letters patent bear witness, From the King himself at Woolmer 30th August the 30th year. By privy seal.

#### **B. Writ 2 [Latin]**

Edward by the grace of God, King of England, Lord of Ireland, and Duke of Aquitaine, to the sheriffs of Sussex, Gloucestershire, and all the bailiffs and loyal subjects of the communities both within and without the liberties to whom these presents are addressed, greetings.

Since we have learnt that the men and mariners being in a certain ship of Bristol coming in company with other ships to Scotland on our service, have left our service with the said ship, despite having received our wages at Dublin, without our licence or that of the admiral of the said fleet in contempt of us and to the manifest delay of the said expedition of war, not wishing to leave this kind of contempt unpunished, we assign our favoured and loyal subject Nicholas Fermbaud and Peter of Dunwich to inquire on oath of honest and law-worthy men of the said town of Bristol by whom the truth may better be made plain who these men are, who, having received our wages and being given receipts by name so deserted from our service and all those found guilty shall be punished as appears more fully in our letters patent. And so we order you that you should assist, answer, consult and help the said Nicholas and Peter as they make clear to you on our behalf; by the king himself,

and this by no means fail to do, given at Woolmer 30th August the thirtieth year.<sup>1</sup>

### C. Writ 3 [Latin]

Edward by the grace of God, King of England, Lord of Ireland and Duke of Aquitaine to the sheriffs of Dorset, and Somerset and all bailiffs and loyal subjects of the same counties within and without the liberties to whom these presents come, greetings.

Although the towns of Poole, Wareham, Lynn and Bridgewater agreed to send a certain number of well-armed ships, to wit one from each of the same towns, to us to assist in our wars in Scotland at our request, however the same communities took no care to send these ships of which we hoped to have had great help in our expedition of war as had been promised to us to our great contempt and the manifest delay of the said expedition

We, therefore, have assigned our favoured and loyal servants Richard of Aston and Peter of Dunwich to discover all those from the said communities and towns who had promised to come to us, whether men or ships, to help in our said war according to this provision and did not come whether men or ships and should be punished as more fully appears in letter patent lately written.

And so we order you that you should assist answer counsel and help the said Richard and Peter to the best of your ability to do this on our behalf. From the king himself, at Woolmer, 30th August the 30th year. By privy seal.

### D. Writ 4 [Latin]

Edward by the grace of God, King of England, Lord of Ireland, and Duke of Aquitaine, to our favoured clerk Peter of Dunwich, greetings.

Since by our letters patent we have appointed and assigned our favoured and loyal servant Edward Charles as captain and Admiral of our fleet of

<sup>1</sup>A writ in Calendar of Close Rolls (CCR) Edward I 1296–1302, p. 564, addressed to Nicholas Fermbaud and dated November 1302, makes clear that the men concerned in a ship called *Mighel* were identified and imprisoned but are now to be released as they have promised Peter of Dunwich that they will go to Scotland to serve the king. See also Writ 6 below. There was clearly particular reluctance among Bristol men to go to Scotland as a writ issued in 1303 directed Nicholas Fermbaud to ‘induce sailors and other men of these parts fit and powerful for the said service by all means that he shall deem fit and to distrain them if need be, to do the premises together with the said burgesses’ (CCR 1302–07 p. 76).

ships from the ports and towns sent along the coast to the northern parts to our town of Berwick on Tweed, moreover setting out in our service from the said town to Scotland by our order, during pleasure, as is set out more fully in our letters patent, we order you that you should assist answer counsel and help the said Edward in everything which appertains to his office of Captain and Admiral to the extent that the said Edward makes known to you on our behalf. By the king himself at Westminster 6th June 34th year of our reign.<sup>1</sup>

E. Writ 5 [Latin]

Edward, by the grace of God, King of England, Lord of Ireland and Duke of Aquitaine greetings to his favoured and loyal subject Thomas of Warbelton and Peter of Dunwich.

Although the governing bodies of the towns of Seaford, Shoreham, Portsmouth, Southampton, Lymington, Yarmouth, Poole, Wareham, Lynne, Teignmouth, Plymouth, Fowey and Bridgewater had lately agreed at our request to send to us a certain number of well-equipped ships, (to wit 2 for the town of Southampton, 1 from each of the other towns) to assist in the war with Scotland, yet the same governing bodies have not taken care, as they were expected to, to send these ships which we had hoped would be a great help to us in the war with Scotland in contempt of us and with obvious great delay to the said expedition: wishing therefore that so great a contempt should not remain unpunished, we assign you to make fully known to us all those in the said towns who had undertaken themselves to come or who had agreed to send men or ships to assist in our war aforesaid but who, according to their agreement with us, have not come or who have not sent men or ships as aforesaid which is disgraceful.

And also we order you that on a certain day and place which shall be decided on for that purpose you should make this clear as set out above. We also order the sheriffs of Sussex, Hampshire, Dorset, Devon, and Somerset and all the bailiffs and loyal men of the said same communities both within and without their liberties that they should assist, answer, consult and help you as you will make clear to them on our behalf. To all this these letters patent bear witness.

Given by the King himself at Westminster 10th August the thirtieth year of the reign.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>1306.

<sup>2</sup>1302.

## F. Writ 6.

Edward by the grace of God, King of England, Lord of Ireland and Duke of Aquitaine, to his loyal and favoured subjects Thomas of Warbelton and Peter of Dunwich, greetings.

So that we may better understand what men and sailors who were lately in a certain ship of Bristol coming in company with other ships to Scotland for our service and who having received our wages at Dublin left the service with the said ship without our licence or that of the admiral of the said ships in contempt of us and the manifest delaying of the expedition of war in Scotland, not wishing this kind of contempt to remain unpunished we assign you to inquire on oath of honest and law-worthy men of the said town of Bristol, by whom the truth of this matter can be better known, who were these men who, having received our wages, so left our service and how much in wages each named individual received and to punish all those you then find guilty as you think fit and as we more fully instruct you.

And so we order you that, on a certain day and place set aside for this you will make this known as set out above ordering the sheriffs of Somerset and Gloucester and all the bailiffs and loyal subjects of the same counties both within and without the liberties that they should assist answer consult and help as you make known to them on our behalf. To which these letters patent bear witness; given by the king himself at Westminster 12th August the thirtieth year.

G. Writ 7<sup>1</sup>

Edward by the grace of God, King of England, Lord of Ireland, and Duke of Aquitaine, to our favoured and loyal subjects Robert of Burgherrsh<sup>2</sup> and Peter of Dunwich, greetings.

Know that since we agreed with Philip king of France, our illustrious and most dear cousin to provide and collect in the port of Sandwich 20 good

<sup>1</sup>A copy of this writ can be found in CPR 1302–07, p. 219. A further writ in the Patent Rolls (CPR 1302–07, p. 237) addressed to the same Peter and Robert and also Robert Savage, Knight, and master Philip Martel, professor of civil law, directing them to go to the King of France to demand satisfaction for the Cinque Ports for their losses at sea caused by the action of men from Calais; this may be connected with this expedition. The brief alliance of Edward I and Philip IV had its roots in the hostility between France and Flanders and the interruption of trade between Flanders and England. The account of the ships to be provided to assist France against Flanders can be found at TNA, E101/12/33 (32 and 33 Edward I, Nov. 1303–05).

<sup>2</sup>Burgherrsh was Constable of Dover Castle.

ships with good crews sufficiently prepared with armed men and other necessities to make war to assist the said king of France in his expedition to Flanders for 4 months beginning on the day the said ships left the port and that the said help ought to be at our cost during the said 4 months and also these ships should be ready prepared to go to Flanders about the feast of St John the Baptist next, and should go in good order from day to day as it appeared to us and our people and after the Constable of Dover Castle had received certain letters patent from the said King of France which letters said that that help might be granted or could be granted without harm or prejudice to us our heirs or our kingdom. Having seen the letters, the said ships should be moved in good faith from the said port to the said parts of Flanders, we therefore assign you to provide and collect or cause to be collected and provided in the said port 20 larger, better, more well equipped ships which you can find in the ports and harbours in all the towns of the Cinque Ports and the south coast from London to the Isle of Wight except Dover with as great haste as possible; seeing that each ship is well made and in good repair and sufficiently armed with 40 armed men and everything necessary to make war. And we order you that you should complete this task as set out above. To which these letters patent bear witness. From the King himself at Sanford in Scotland 8th April the 32nd year of the reign.

Writ of privy seal.

#### H. Writ 8<sup>1</sup>

Edward by the grace of God King of England, Lord of Ireland and Duke of Aquitaine, to the burgesses, communities, goodmen, bailiffs and loyal subjects both within and without the liberties from Southampton to Cornwall and also from Cornwall to any places where these presents come ---<sup>2</sup> the aforesaid towns ships for our service for the expedition ---? in Scotland ---? grant to our favoured clerk Peter of Dunwich who was sent to you ---? by letters patent ---? which same Peter then showed us more plainly the grant and the help we might expect from our subjects. And wishing to expedite the same voyage to the said parts of Scotland we send our clerk to you with our favoured servant William Montagu to supervise the said voyage with good crews of strong well equipped armed men for our service and we assign the said William to hasten the coming of the said naval force to the said parts in our service aforesaid. And so we order

<sup>1</sup>A related writ can be found in CPR 1302–07, p. 128.

<sup>2</sup>Several words are illegible due to damage to the MS.

you to help the said William in these provisions to hasten sending the said happy expedition of war as he will more plainly explain to you, in witness of this are these letters patent During pleasure By the king himself; 23rd May 31st year.<sup>1</sup>

# I. Writ 9 [Norman French]

Edward by the grace of God, King of England, Lord of Ireland and Duke of Aquitaine, to our very dear clerk Peter of Dunwich<sup>2</sup> greetings.

Since we wish that either you or our very dear servant William de Montagu should go by sea to Cornwall to hasten the ships and other vessels which should come on our service in Scotland in company with those of the Cinque Ports, we order you that now, having seen these letters, you should go to our Chancellor with our commission in your name and that of our said servant and perform the said task as seems fit to you and our said Chancellor.

Given under our privy seal at Castrehounte 14th May the 31st year.<sup>3</sup>

# J. Writ 10<sup>4</sup>

Edward by the grace of God, King of England, Lord of Ireland, Duke of Aquitaine to his favoured clerk Peter of Dunwich, greetings.

Since by our various letters we ordered the bailiffs and goodmen of Seaford and Burn to send 1 ship together with the bailiffs and goodmen of Shoreham, Hove, Brightelmston, and Aldrington, 1 ship, with the bailiffs and goodmen of Portsmouth, and Gosport, 1 ship, the bailiffs and goodmen of Southampton, 2 ships, the bailiff and goodmen of Hamble and town of St Helens, 1 ship, together with the Abbot of Battle,<sup>5</sup> 1 ship, the bailiffs and goodmen of Yarmouth, and Lymington, 1 ship, the prior of Christchurch, 1 ship, the bailiffs and goodmen of Poole, Wareham and Brinkesege, 2 ships, Weymouth, 1 ship, Lyme, 1 ship, Seaton and Sidmouth, 1 ship, Exeter and Exmouth, 1 ship, Teignmouth, and Dawlish, 1 ship, the bailiffs and goodmen of Dartmouth, Portelmouth and Bery, 2

<sup>1</sup>1303.

<sup>2</sup>This name is followed in the MS by a large space crossed through; this probably indicates that another name has been erased.

<sup>3</sup>1303.

<sup>4</sup>Also to be found in CPR Edward I 1302–07, p. 75 in a slightly different format.

<sup>5</sup>This is a correct reading of the Latin but it may be a scribal mistake for Beaulieu since the towns are listed more or less in geographical order.

ships, Plymouth Plumpton and Yealm, 1 ship, the bailiffs and goodmen of Barnstaple and Ilfracombe, 1 ship, those of Lostudiel, Bodymne,<sup>1</sup> Fowey and Polruan 1 ship and those of Looe, Assch, Portpilliance, 1 ship, those of Bridgewater 1 ship, and those of Bristol to prepare two ships, all with their crews, well equipped with all other necessities which should be sent to Newcastle on Tyne to help our expedition of war in Scotland, and to be there on Ascension Day next, ready and prepared to set forth from there against the Scots our enemies and rebels on our wages to repress the rebellion vigorously with God's help. Having seen that the communities of certain of the said towns which had promised to send this number of ships to our expedition of war according to this provision had not sent them according to this provision by which considerable damage has been done, doubting that damage of this kind was intended by the lack of service of some of the said bailiffs, goodmen, abbot or prior, in our said war which happy expedition is much in our heart and the ships could easily be sent we assign you with the sheriffs of Sussex, Hampshire, Somerset, Dorset, Gloucester, Devon and Cornwall in which counties the said bailiffs, towns, abbot and prior are situated to advise the bailiffs and goodmen of our said towns at a set day and place that the ships should be sent for our aid. And so we order you that all and singular of this provision should be made and you should set it out in the said form. And when this has been done you should tell us as quickly as possible that the said communities have undertaken this provision in the said form and the counties will assist you on our behalf. These our letters patent bear witness to this. By the king himself; at Westminster 10th November the 30th year<sup>2</sup>

6. *An account of payments due to ship masters for transporting the Earl of Ulster's forces to Scotland from Ireland in 1303*

[TNA, E101/10/30, Latin]

## NECESSARIES

To Lord Alexander of Bykenor the clerk assigned by the Justiciar and Treasurer of Ireland to provide, arrest and set forth ships for the passage of the Earl of Ulster and other Irishmen coming to Scotland at the order of the king for the wars of the king himself in that place in the thirty-first year of his reign and to pay the wages of the sailors of the aforesaid ships

<sup>1</sup>Possibly Boddinick.

<sup>2</sup>1302.

and for doing other necessary things accounts for the money paid by himself to the masters of various ships and to the crews of the same ships arrested by him and others deputed to carry out this arrest in various Irish ports for the passage of the said force from Ireland to Scotland at various times and accounts before 15th June. By account with the same  
£47 12d.<sup>1</sup>

To the same for the wages of the said Maurice Russell and others arresting the said ships in various Irish ports by order and commission of the said Justiciar and Treasurer in the months of May and June. £7.

To the same for money spent by himself for spars and *clayes* bought and provided for William de Mere baron of the said Exchequer at Dublin to repair ships in the port of Dublin for the passage aforesaid.  
£6 18s. 5½d.

To the same for money spent by himself on boards and nails bought through master John of Dover chamberlain of the said Exchequer for repairing ships in the same port. £17 13s 8d.

To the same for money spent on spars *clayyns* boards and nails bought for Nigel de Penyeston for repairing ships in the port of Drogheda £12 18s. 8d. as appears in an account of the same Lord Alexander.  
Total £44 10s 10d.

## WINCHELSEA

To the same for money spent for the wages of the masters of various ships<sup>2</sup> and the crews of the same retained at the king's wages for the said passage from Ireland to Scotland for the King's wars in that place to wit for the wages of John Prest master of the ship which is called *Cog John* of Winchelses and 10 crewmen of the same ship for their wages and 1 page who is called *botswayn* from 11th June till 8th July both counted for 30 days to the master 6d. per day all sailors 3d. per day and the page 1½d. per day. In money spent through the said Lord Alexander of Bykenore at Dublin.<sup>3</sup>  
£4 13s. 9d.

<sup>1</sup>£46 crossed out.

<sup>2</sup>A short phrase has been added over an omission mark but is illegible.

<sup>3</sup>Added over an omission mark.

## TEIGNMOUTH

To Richard le Scalon master of a ship which is called *la James of Teigne* with Richard Mogge master of a ship which is called *la Newecross* of the same, to Raymond Tolle master of the ship which is called *la Nicholas* of the same, to Richard Mayinge master of the ship *St John* of the same, and Richard de Clyve master of the ship which is called *la Nicholas* of the same for their wages and 70 sailors, the crews of the same ships and 5 pages for the said 30 days all per day as above. £30 18s. 9d.

## CONWAY

To John Judet master of a ship which is called *la Maudelyne of Coneway*, to Thomas of Ireland master of a ship which is called *la Mariote* of the same, to John le Waleys master of a ship which is called *la Mairie* of the same, to Simon Cayndigan master of a ship which is called *la Jone* of the same, and to Henry Maldeynne master of a ship which is called *la Mariote* of the same for their wages and 48 sailors the crew of the same ships and 4 pages for the aforesaid 30 days to all per day as above £22 10s.

## BURTON

To William le Smale master of the ship which is called *la Nicholas* and 8 crewmen of the same ship for their wages for the same period. 75s.

## NESTON

To Robert Denys master of a ship which is called *la Garlainde* for his wages and 8 crew for the said 30 days 75s.

## VARIOUS PORTS

To Stephen Godrich master of a ship which is called *la Margaret of Watchet*, Simon Milde master of a ship which is called *la Jonette of Herewich*, Thomas Swift master of a ship which is called *la Alifote of Hornmouth*, William Auefray master of a ship which is called *la Margaret of Millebroke*, and Robert le Sersaut master of a ship which is called *la Trinity of Weymouth* 1 constable 72 crew and 4 boys for their wages for the same period. £32 5s.

## BRISTOL

Thomas Roper master of a ship which is called *Cog Simonel* and Alexander Kyng master of a ship which is called *la Margaret*, John de la Pole master of a ship called *la Rose* for their wages 42 crew of the same ships and 3 boys for the same 30 days per day as above £19 6s. 3d.

## VARIOUS PORTS

To Robert Crakenor Adam le Typpere and 14 others masters of various ships from various ports in England Scotland and Wales for their wages 171 crew of the same ships and their 12 boys for the same period to each per day as above £78 7s. 6d.

## THE ADMIRAL

To Peter of Parys Admiral of the Irish fleet for his wages for 40 days rate per day 12d. 40s.

## CORK

To Adam Fremyng master of a ship which is called *Cog Peter*, John le Lang master of a ship which is called *la Michel* 22 crew of the same ships and 2 boys for their wages for the same period. £10 2s. 6d.

## YOUGHAL

To Robert Brian master of a ship called *la Godber*, Robert Gildesse master of a ship which is called *la Mariote* and 10 other masters of various ships from the port of Youghal 3 constables 185 crewmen of the same ships and 12 boys for their wages for the same period. £82 17s. 6d.

## ROSS

To Thomas Alberchawe master of a ship which is called *la Jonette*, Robert Le Waleys master of a ship which is called *la Katerine* and 2 other masters: 4 ships from the port of Ross 50 crew of the same ships and 3 boys for the aforesaid 30 days. £22 6s. 3d.

## DUBLIN

To Thomas de Stane and 2 colleagues master of 3 ships from the port of Dublin for their wages 46 crewmen of the same ships and 3 boys from 16th June till 5th July both counted for 20 days to all per day as above.

£13 7s. 6d.

## DROGHEDA

To Adam Herman master of a ship which is called *la Mariote* and Andrew of Carlisle master of a ship which is called *la Margarete of Drogheda* for their wages 18 crew of the same ships and 1 boy<sup>1</sup> for the same 20 days.

112s. 6d.

## WINCHELSEA

To Gruaf Teneman master of a ship which is called *Cog Edward* and 2 colleagues masters of 3 ships from the port of Winchelsea for their wages 6 constables and 171 crew of the same ships from 9th July till 23rd of the same month both counted for 15 days to each per day as above. In money paid to the same by the said Alexander de Bykenore at Dublin and Carrickfergus.<sup>2</sup>

£35 8s.

## RYE

To Hamour Robert master of a ship which is called *la Luke* and Robert Michel master of a ship which is called *la Rose* for their wages 4 constables and 94 crewmen of the same ships for the same period

£19 17s. 6d.

## HASTINGS

To Robert Fever master of a ship the *Holy Cross* and Robert Honas master of a ship *St Mary* for their wages and 3 constables and 79 crewmen of the same ships for the same 15 days.

£16 13s. 9d.

<sup>1</sup>2 crossed out.

<sup>2</sup>The last sentence added over an omission mark.

## ROMENEY

To John Spice master of the ship *St George* and Hamour Tymlane master<sup>1</sup> which is called *la Margaret* for their wages 3 constables and 86 crew of the same ships for the same period. £18.

## SANDWICH

To Michael Le Iesue captain of the ships of Sandwich at a daily rate of 12d for his wages for the same period. 25s.

To Loweric Lambert master of a ship which is called *la Great*<sup>2</sup> William Termouth master of a ship *St Mary* and John Lambert master of a ship which is called *la Legende* for their wages 4 constables and 100 crew of the same ships for the same 15 days £21 15s.

## HYTHE

To William Queymerel master of a ship which is called *Christemasse* and William Arale master of a ship which is called *la Sceve* for their wages 2 constables and 69 crew of the same ships for the same period. £14 8s. 9d.

## DOVER

To John Lamb and his colleagues masters of 9 ships from Dover for their wages 15 constables and 366 crew of the same ships for the abovesaid 15 days. £77 12s. 6d.

HAMPTON<sup>3</sup>

To John Godrich master of a ship called *la Scede* and John Gobard master of a ship called *la Blith* for their wages 2 constables and 37 crew of the same ships for the same period £8 8s. 9d.

<sup>1</sup>Omission in the MS.

<sup>2</sup>Remainder of the name probably omitted.

<sup>3</sup>Southampton.

## DARTMOUTH

To Hilary Cole master of a ship *St Mary* and Andrew Potel master of a ship which is called *la Naclere* for their wages 2 constables<sup>1</sup> and 50 crew of the same ships for the same period. £10 17s.

## BRISTOL

To Thomas de Hakenham master of a ship which is called *la Blithe* and William Cote master of the ship *St Michael* 2 constables and 61 crew of the same ships for the same period. £12 17s 9d.

## VARIOUS PORTS IN ENGLAND WALES AND IRELAND

To John Drake master of the ship which is called *la Alifote* for his wages and 12 other masters of various ships from various other ports in England 9 constables and 294<sup>2</sup> crewmen of the same ships for the aforesaid 15 days £63 12s.

To Simon Milde master of a ship which is called *la Jonette* for his wages 16 other masters of various ships from various ports in England Wales and Ireland 1 constable 199 crewmen of the same ships and 13 boys for the same 15 days £46 4s 7½d.<sup>3</sup>

## TEIGNMOUTH

To Richard Scalon master of a ship which is called *la James* and 5 other masters of 6 ships of Teignmouth 1 constable 93 crew of the same ships for their wages and their 5 boys for the same period. £20 10s. 7½d.

## ·YOUGHAL

To John Jordan master of a ship which is called *la Gaillard* and 6 other masters of 7 ships of Youghal for their wages 1 constable 90 crew of the same ships and their 7 boys for the aforesaid 15 days. £22 8s. 1½d.

<sup>1</sup>Added over an omission mark.

<sup>2</sup>Corrected from 313.

<sup>3</sup>Added note in the right-hand margin: 'money spent by the said Lord Alexander of Bekenowe at Drogheda.'

## CORK

To Adam Frenx master of a ship which is called *la Cog Peter* and John Le Lung master of a ship which is called *la Mighel* for his wages 22 crew of the same ships and their 2 boys for the same period. 101s. 3d.

## DOVER

To Gerald Alard Admiral of the fleet of the Cinque Ports for his good help by himself undertaken concerning the conduct of the ships of the same ports and other ships 100s.

To Walter Godey for the same, 40s.

## CONWAY

To Thomas of Ireland master of the ship *St Mary* John le Waleys master of the ship which is called *la Marie* for their wages 22 crew of the same ships and 2 boys for 10 days beginning with 9th July.<sup>1</sup> 67s. 6d.

## BRISTOL

To Thomas Roper master of a ship which is called *Cog Simenel* and Alexander King master of a ship which is called *la Margaret* and Robert Richeman master of a ship which is called *la Rose* and John de la Pole master of a ship which is called *la Plente* for their wages 42 crewmen of the same ships and their 3 boys for the same period. £6 8s. 9d.

## CHESTER

To David de Fredersham master of a ship which is called *la Nicholas* Jordano de Makeffeld master of a ship which is called *la Nalldieu* and Alan de Hales master of a ship which is called *Blakbot* for their wages and 19 crew of the same ships and their 2 boys for the same period, £4 10s.

<sup>1</sup>Added note in the right-hand margin: 'in money spent by the said Lord Thomas [*sic*] de Bikenowe at Carrickfergus'.

## ROSS

To Thomas Bercheghe master of a ship which is called *la Jonette* Robert le Waleys master of a ship which is called *la Katerine* and Galfard Pecok master of a ship which is called *la Godeyene* for their wages 42 crew of the same ships and their 3 boys for the same period. £6 3s. 9d.

## NEWHAVEN

To Adam Typpere master of a ship which is called *la Nicholas* for his wages 11 crew of the same ship for the same period. 33s 9d.

## CAERNARVON

To John de Hoemouth master of a ship called *la Marie* for his wages 9 crew of the same ship and 1 boy. 28s. 9d.

## YOUGHAL

To Richard Arundel master of a ship called *la Margaret* for his wages 1 constable 28 crewmen 1 boy. For the same period, £4 15s.

[Dorse of the roll]<sup>1</sup>

## WINCHELSEA

To Gerard Tanman master of ship which is called the *Cog Edward* for his wages 2 constables and 57 crewmen of the same ship for 7 days in money paid by the said lord Alexander of Byknore at Endiskap. 105s 3d.

## SANDWICH

To Laurence Lambard master of *la Mariote*, John ---? master of a ship called *la Legere*,<sup>2</sup> and William Termail master of the ship *St Marie* for their wages ---? constables 100<sup>3</sup> crewmen of the same ships for the same period. £10 3s.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The dorse of the roll is in poor condition with much rubbing and some illegibility.

<sup>2</sup>Surname of John illegible; whole phrase added to the MS over an omission mark.

<sup>3</sup>Corrected from 61.

<sup>4</sup>Corrected from £6 4s 3d.

To Nicholas Iessew captain of the Sandwich ships for his wages for the same period at 12d per day. 7s.

#### VARIOUS PORTS IN ENGLAND AND IRELAND

To Kingman Yedrich for his wages and 4 other masters of 5 ships of Lynn and other ports in England and Ireland ---? constables and 115 crewmen of the same ships for the same period. £11 13s 7½d.

[Heading illegible]

To Roger ---? master of the ship *St Thomas* carrying 26 horses in his said ship from the port of Dublin to Scotland receiving for each horse half a mark<sup>1</sup> as freight charge. £7 13s 4d.

To John Reynkok master of the ship *Holy Cross* carrying 18 horses in the same ship receiving for each horse as before as freight. £6

To John Howet, master of the ship *St John* carrying across 18 horses receiving for each horse as before. £6.

To Richard Fisher master of the ---? ferrying 26 horses in the same way in the same ship receiving for each horse as before. £7 13s 4d.

To William Germany master of the *Sanday* for 16 horses ferried in the same way at the rate for each as above. 106s 8d.

To John Bre master of the ship *Holy Cross* ferrying 20 horses in the same ship as above for the freight. £6 13s 4d.

#### CORK

To Richard Berwey master of the ship *St Anne* for ferrying 16 horses in the same way rate per horse as above. 106s 8d.

#### BRIDGEWATER<sup>2</sup>

To Andrew le Weyse master of the *Precher*<sup>3</sup> for ferrying 18 horses in the same way rate per horse as before. £6.

<sup>1</sup>6s 8d.

<sup>2</sup>This reading is uncertain owing to damage to the MS.

<sup>3</sup>This reading is uncertain.

To ---? Le Mercer, sheriff of Carrickfergus for money expended by himself for the freight of 150 horses to the aforesaid place in certain small Ulster ships at the charge per horse of 3s. £25<sup>1</sup>

#### VARIOUS PORTS IN ENGLAND WALES AND IRELAND

To John Indic master of the *Magdeleyne of Conway* and 11 other masters of various ships from various ports in England Wales and Ireland retained at the king's wages in Ireland to ferry the army of Ulster from the island of Bovel to Layggys in Conyngham for their wages 129 crewmen of the same ships and 10 boys for 10 days, 7th August the last counted.

£19 15s.

#### BYKNORE FOR THE FREIGHT OF VARIOUS STORES

To Lord Alexander of Bikenore for the freight of various stores by Robert de Senglech for the victuals of the earl of Ulster from Ireland to Scotland. £19 0s 8d.

To the same for money spent by himself for the freight of 1 small ship assigned to transport the victuals of the Lord Treasurer de Mandeville and Nigel Le Bruy in the same way. 40s.

Total £21 0s 8d.

#### 7. *Roll of payments to ships captains from the Cinque Ports in 1306*

[TNA, E101/13/8, Latin]<sup>2</sup>

#### HASTINGS<sup>3</sup>

Concerning Bartholomew Robard master of the ship *Holy Ghost* who came with the same ship to Scotland at the order of the King for his wages, those of two constables each at 6d. per day and 39 others the crew of the same ship each at 3d. per day<sup>4</sup> paid from Sunday 3rd July on which day they made sail to the aforesaid place till 17th September on which day 10 of the aforesaid sailors returned home (the first day counted and not the

<sup>1</sup>This is a rare case of what looks like an error in calculation.

<sup>2</sup>These ships were intended to congregate at Lanercost.

<sup>3</sup>The names of towns are in the left-hand margin in the MS.

<sup>4</sup>'Each at 3d per day' inserted over an omission mark in the MS.

last) that is for 76 days subtracting the 15 days owed for their service to the king. £34 6s. 3d.

To the same for his wages and one constable and 29 crewmen of the same ship from 17th September to the feast of St Michael to wit 29th day of the same month both being counted for 13 days to each as before 107s. 3d.: for the expedition made at Lanercost on 4th October in the said 34th year.

Overall total £39 13s.<sup>1</sup> 6d.

To Roger Mody master of the cog *St Thomas* who came in the same way, two constables and 39 crewmen of the same ship for wages from 5th July to the said 17th September on which day he and this ship returned home the first day counted and not the last, for 74<sup>2</sup> days subtracting 15 days service as before, per day as before being present on the same day.<sup>3</sup>

£33 3s. 9d.<sup>4</sup>

## WINCHELSEA

To Shipman Toldelone master of the cog *St Edward* who came in the same way for his wages 2<sup>5</sup> constables and 17 crewmen of the same ship from 1st July till 17th September on which day 13 from the said ship went home, first day counted and not the last, for 78 days 15 days subtracted for service as above to each per day as above £49 2s. 3d.

To the same for his wages 2 constables and 44 other sailors for the aforesaid 13 days £8 2s. 6d. being present on the same day.

Total £57 14s. 9d.

To Robert Atte Carte master of a ship called *la Spicynghorn* who came in the same way for his wages 2 constables and 39 other crewmen from 5th July to said 17th September on which day 10 crewmen returned home first day counted and not the last for 74 days<sup>6</sup> 15 days subtracted for service as above; £33 3s. 9d.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Substituted for 16s in MS.

<sup>2</sup>Corrected from 76 days in the MS.

<sup>3</sup>Right-hand marginal note: 'to the same for his wages 2 constables and the same sailors for 15 days on their journey home; £7 8s. 5d.'

<sup>4</sup>Corrected from £33 5s. 3d.

<sup>5</sup>Corrected from 1 in the MS.

<sup>6</sup>Substituted for 76 days.

<sup>7</sup>Substituted for £38 6s. 2d.

To the same for his wages 3 constables and 29 other sailors for the aforesaid 13 days 113s. 9d. Total £38 17s. 6d.<sup>1</sup>

To Henry le Weldisshe master of the *Katerine* who came in the same way for his wages 2 constables and 39 other sailors from said 5th July till said 17th September on which day 10 crewmen returned home first day counted and not the last for 74<sup>2</sup> days 15 days subtracted for service as before £33 3s. 9d.<sup>3</sup>

To the same for his wages 2 constables and 29 other sailors as aforesaid 113s. 9d. being present on the same day. Total £38 17s. 6d.<sup>4</sup>

To Clement of Zealand master of the ship *St John* who came in the same way for his wages 2 constables and 39 other sailors from 1st July till said 17th September on which day he returned home with his ship, the first day counted and not the last for 78 days 15 days subtracted for service as above to each per day as before being present on the same day £35 8s. 9d.

## RYE

To Stephen le Wyse master of the cog *St George* who came in the same way for his wages 2 constables and 49 crewmen on the same ship from 3rd July to said 17th September on which day 16 of the said sailors returned home the first day counted and not the last for 76 days 15 days subtracted for service as before to each per day as above £41 18s. 9d.<sup>5</sup> To the same for his wages 2 constables and 33 other sailors for said 13 days £6 6s. 9d. being present on the same day. Total £48 5s. 6d.

To Hamour Robar master of the ship *St Lucy* who came in the same way for his wages 2 constables and 50 other sailors from 4th July till said 17th September on which day he returned home with his ship, the first day counted and not the first for 75 days 15 days subtracted for his service as before £42<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup>£40 crossed out.

<sup>2</sup>Substituted for 76.

<sup>3</sup>Substituted for £34 6s. 3d.

<sup>4</sup>£40 crossed out.

<sup>5</sup>3d. crossed out.

<sup>6</sup>Right-hand marginal note: 'to the same and 2 constables and the same crew for 15 days going home; £10 10s.'

## ROMENEY

To Hamour Toupland master of the cog *St Margaret*, who came in the same way for his wages 2 constables and 39 other sailors from 1st July till said 17th September on which day 10 crewmen from the said ship returned home the first day counted and not the last for 78 days 15 days subtracted for service as above £35 8s. 9d. To the same for his wages 1 constable and 30<sup>1</sup> other sailors for the said 13 days 110s. being present in the same place. Total £40 19s. 3d.

To John Spice master of *la Godbegote* who came in the same way for his wages 2 constables and 39 other sailors<sup>2</sup> from 1st July to said 17th September on which day he returned home with the same ship the first day counted and not the last for 78 days 15 days subtracted for service as before. £38 8s. 9d.<sup>3</sup>

## HYTHE

To William Oneymera master of the *Nicholas* who came in the same way for his wages 1 constable and 28 other sailors from 3rd July till said 17th September on which day 6 of the aforesaid sailors returned home the first day counted and not the last for 76 days 15 days subtracted for service due as above £24 8s. To the same for his wages 1 constable and 22 crewmen for the said 13 days £4 4s. 6d. Total £28 12s. 6d.

To William Pikeman master of *la Godebegote* who came in the same way for his wages 1 constable and 28 sailors from 3rd July till said 17th September on which day he returned home with the same ship the first day counted and not the last for 76 days 15 days subtracted for due service as above. Total £24 8s.<sup>4</sup>

To John Maudelyn master of the *St Edmund* who came in the same way for his wages 1 constable and 26 other sailors for the said 76 days 15 days subtracted for the due service being present on that day £22 17s.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup>28 crossed out.

<sup>2</sup>'For the said 75', crossed out in the MS.

<sup>3</sup>Right-hand marginal note: 'to the same and 2 constables and the same sailors for 15 days returning home £8 8s 8d.'

<sup>4</sup>Right-hand marginal note: 'to the same 1 constable and the same sailors for 15 days going home £6'.

<sup>5</sup>Right-hand marginal note: 'to the same 1 constable and the same sailors for 15 days going home: 112s 6d.'

To Robert Welyfare master of the *Welyfare* who came in the same way for his wages 1 constable and 26 other sailors for the aforesaid 76 days 15 days subtracted for the due service as above being present on the same day £22 17s.<sup>1</sup>

## DOVER

To Peter Hamekyn master of *la Jonette* who came in the same way for his wages 2 constables and 39 other sailors from 1st July till 17th September on which day he returned home with the said ship the first day counted and not the last for 74 days 15 days subtracted for the service due to the king being present on the same day £33 3s. 9d.<sup>2</sup>

To Richard le Archer master of the ship *St Thomas* who came in the same way for his wages 2 constables and 39 other sailors for the same period 15 days subtracted as before £33 3s. 9d.<sup>3</sup>

To William Godyn master of the ship *St Thomas* who came in the same way for his wages 2 constables and 39 other sailors for the same period 15 days subtracted as above £33 3s. 9d.<sup>4</sup>

To John le Flete master of the *Chivalere* who came in the same way for his wages 2 constables and 39 other sailors for the same period 15 days subtracted as before. £33 3s. 9d.<sup>5</sup>

To John of Solerton master of the *Welyfare* who came in the same way for his wages 2 constables and 39 other sailors from 5th July till 17th September on which day 8 of the said crew went home, the first day counted and not the last for 74 days 15 days subtracted for the service due<sup>6</sup> £33 3s 9d.

To the same for his wages 1 constable and 27 other sailors for the said 13 days 117s being there on the same day Total £39 0s. 9d.

<sup>1</sup>Right-hand marginal note: 'to the same for 1 constable returning on that day 112s.6d.'

<sup>2</sup>Right-hand marginal note: 'to the same and 2 constables and the crew for 15 days returning £8 8s. 9d.'

<sup>3</sup>Right-hand marginal note: 'to the same 2 constables and the same sailors for 15 days returning £8 8s. 9d.'

<sup>4</sup>Right-hand marginal note: 'to the same 2 constables and the same sailors returning for 15 days £8 8s. 9d.'

<sup>5</sup>Right-hand marginal note: 'to the same 2 constables and the same sailors for 15 days returning £8 8s. 9d.'

<sup>6</sup>Added to the MS over an omission mark.

To William Keneston master of *la Prisonere* coming in the same way for his wages and 2 constables and 39 other sailors from the said 5th July to the said 17th September on which day 8 of the said sailors went home the first day counted and not the last for 74 days 15 days subtracted as before £33 3s 9d. To the same for his wages 1 constable and 32 other sailors for the said 13 days 117s in the same place. Total £39 0s. 9d.

To Solomon Lenyng master of the *Margaret* who came in the same way for his wages 2 constables and 39 other sailors from the said 5th July till 17th September on which day 8 of the aforesaid crew went home the first day counted and not the last for 74 days 15 days subtracted as before £33 3s. 9d. To the same for his wages 1 constable and 32 other sailors for the aforesaid 13 days 117s. being present on the same day. £39 0s. 9d.

#### DOVER AND ROMENEY

To Adam le Shipman master of *la Godbegote* who came in the same way for his wages 2 constables and 39 other sailors from the said 5th July till the said 17th September on which day 8 of the said crew returned home the first day counted and not the last for 74 days 15 days subtracted as above £33 3s. 9d. To the same for his wages 1 constable and 32 crew for the aforesaid 13 days 117s. £39 0s 9d.

#### SANDWICH

To Coggere master of a ship called *Sandwich* who came in the same way for his wages 2 constables 39 crew of the same ship from 6th July to the feast of St Michael<sup>1</sup> to wit 29th September both days counted for 87 days 15 days subtracted for service due to the king as above. £40 10s.<sup>2</sup>

To Symon Joye master of the cog *Holy Ghost of Sandwich* who came in the same way for his wages 2 constables and 39 crewmen of the same ship for the aforesaid 87 days 15 days subtracted for service as above. £40 10s.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 17th September crossed out.

<sup>2</sup> Corrected from £43.

<sup>3</sup> Right-hand marginal note: 'total sum £1967 2s.'

## HASTINGS

To Bartholomew Robard master of the ship *Spirit* for his wages 1 constable and 29 crewmen of the same ship from 30th September till 24th October both days counted for 25 days £10 6s. 3d. To the same for his wages 1 constable and 29 crew for 15 days returning home by leave of the king £6 3s. 9d. Total £16 10s.

## WINCHELSEA

To Shipman Toldelone master of the cog *St Edward* for his wages 2 constables and 44 crew of the same ship for the said 25 days £15 12s. 6d. To the same for his wages 2 constables and sailors aforesaid for the said 15 days £9 7s. 6d. Total £25

To Robert Atte Carte master of *la Spicynghorn* for his wages 1 constable and 29 crew of the same ship for the said 25 days £10 5s. 3d. To the same for his wages 1 constable and 29 crew aforesaid for the said 15 days, £6 3s. 9d. Total £16 10s.

To Henry Le Weldesshe master of the *Katerine* for his wages 1 constable and 29 crew of the same ship for the said 25 days £10 6s. 3d. To the same for his wages 1 constable and 29 crew aforesaid for the said 15 days £6 3s. 9d. Total £16 10s.

## RYE

To Stephen le Wyse master of the cog *St George* for his wages 2 constables and 33 crew of the said ship for the said 25 days £12 3s. 9d. To the same for his wages 2 constables the aforesaid crew for the said 15 days £7 6s. 3d. Total £19 10s.

## ROMENEY

To Hamour Toupland master of the cog *St Margaret* for his wages 1 constable and 30 crew of the same ship for the said 25 days £10 12s. 6d. To the same for his wages 1 constable and the said 30 crewmen for the said 15 days £6 7s. 6d. Total £17<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Corrected from £16 19s. 6d.

## HYTHE

To William Oneymera master of *la Nicholas* for his wages 2 constables and 39 crew of the same ship for the said 25 days £14 15s. To the same for his wages 2 constables and the said crew for the said 15 days £8 8s. 9d. Total £22 10s.

## DOVER

To John de Solerton master of *la Welyfare* for his wages 1 constable and 32 crew of the same ship for the said 25 days £11 17s. 6d. To the same for his wages 1 constable and same said crew for the said 15 days £7 2s. 6d. Total £19.

To William Kenestan master of *la Prisonere* for his wages 1 constable and 32 crew for the said 25 days £11 17s. 6d. To the same for his wages 1 constable and the same crew for the said 15 days £7 2s. 6d. Total £19

To Solomon Lenyng master of the *Margaret* for his wages 1 constable and 32 crew for the said 25 days £11 17s. 6d. To the same for his wages 1 constable and the same crew for the said 15 days £7 2s. 6d. Total £19

## DOVER AND ROMENEY

To Adam Shipman master of the *Godebyete* for his wages 1 constable and 32 crew of the same ship for the said 25 days £11 17s. 6d. To the same for his wages 1 constable and the same crew for the said 15 days £7 2s. 6d. Total £19

## SANDWICH

To Coggere master of the ship which is called *Goldring* for his wages 2 constables and 39 crew of the same ship for the said 25 days £14 15d. To the same for his wages 2 constables and the same crew for the said 15 days £8 8s. 9d. Total £22 10s.

To Simon Joye master of the cog *Holy Spirit* for his wages 2 constables and 39 crew of the same ship for the said 25 days £14 15d. To the same for his wages 2 constables and the same sailors for the said 15 days £8 8s. 9d. Total £22 10s.

## CAPTAINS OF THE FLEET

To John Jacob<sup>1</sup> John Roger Thomas de Estwell John ---? and Laurence Wyberd captains of the said fleet for their wages from 3rd July till 8th November both counted for 129 days the rate per day for each of them 12d. being with the said fleet and also returning home. £32 5s.

The rate to the 24 shipmasters aforesaid for the pilotage<sup>2</sup> of the same fleet for each 20s. £24.

Total for this account £1,276 14s.<sup>3</sup> of which £86 1 mark [13s. 4d.] was received from the Wardrobe at Lanercost in the month of October.

And so there is owing to them by this account made at Lanercost 22nd October

£1,190 3s. 8d.

[On the dorse of the membrane]

## DOVER

To John Lamb master of the ship which is called *Edward of Dover* who came with his same ship to Scotland at the order of the king for his wages 2 constables each at a rate per day 6d. and 39 of his crew each at a rate per day 3d. from 20th July till 24th October both counted for 97<sup>4</sup> days 15 days subtracted for his service to the king by account made with Nicholas Larcher at Lanercost 19th February in the 35th year £46 2s. 6d.<sup>5</sup>

## 'SANDWICH

To Gilbert of Fenglesham master of the ship which is called *le Snake Holy Spirit of Sandwich* who came in the same way for his wages 2 constables each at a rate per day 6d. and 39 crew each at a rate per day 3d. for the aforesaid 97 days 15 days subtracted for his service due to the king as

<sup>1</sup>'and his 3 companions' added over an omission mark and then crossed out.

<sup>2</sup>*lodemanagium*.

<sup>3</sup>17s. crossed out.

<sup>4</sup>Note in right-hand margin that money was paid at Lanercost; not wholly legible due to damage to the MS.

<sup>5</sup>Marginal note: 'he has a bill.'

before by account with the aforesaid Nicholas in the same place the same day. £46 2s. 6d.<sup>1</sup>

Be it recorded that this account made with the aforesaid John and Gilbert was allocated by order of the bishop of Coventry and Lichfield Treasurer and by petition from the Council.

### **List of the Documents Transcribed**

- 1 TNA, E101/7/25
- 2 TNA, E101/9/27
- 3 TNA, E101/12/6
- 4 TNA, E101/11/28
- 5 TNA, E101/10/21
- 6 TNA, E101/10/30
- 7 TNA, E101/13/8

<sup>1</sup>There is a separate writ sewn in at the head of the roll which repeats this item.

## II

# LORD ADMIRAL LISLE AND THE INVASION OF SCOTLAND, 1544

*Edited by*  
*C. S. Knighton and David Loades*<sup>1</sup>

England's rulers have only occasionally resorted to sea power in their attempts to coerce their northern neighbour. England's own Conqueror did so in 1072, and was followed by Edward I, as the previous contribution has illustrated, and by the future Richard III in 1480. Where the aim was prolonged occupation, the main force always had to travel overland. But when in 1544 Henry VIII intended a swift savage attack, a seaborne strike on Scotland's capital was the obvious strategy. The political and military history of this invasion is familiar, and recently rehearsed in two valuable studies.<sup>2</sup> The present collection looks at the specifically naval aspects of the operation, which would be repeated to even greater effect in the invasion of 1547. It also focuses on the role of the newly appointed Lord Admiral, John Dudley, Viscount Lisle – best remembered as Duke of Northumberland in Edward VI's reign, but whose work for the Royal Navy is now properly credited.<sup>3</sup>

This collection includes several documents here printed for the first time from the State Papers. Our knowledge of the operation as a whole derives chiefly from the MS collection of the Duke of Hamilton now in the British Library. Since these papers are already published in full transcript,<sup>4</sup> only relevant extracts are printed here. Apart from the

<sup>1</sup>Bibliographical abbreviations are listed at the end of this Introduction.

<sup>2</sup>G. Phillips, *The Anglo-Scots Wars, 1513–1550: A Military History* (Woodbridge, 1999), esp. pp. 161–9. M. Merriman, *The Rough Wooings: Mary Queen of Scots, 1542–1551* (East Linton, 2000), esp. pp. 143–9. These authors stress the naval dimension of the campaign ('sophisticated use of the naval arm's offensive capability': Phillips, p. 162; 'an ingenious and highly effective demonstration of sea power': Merriman, p. 150). Both make clear the advantages of an amphibious operation in terms of flexibility and surprise, but the details of the naval preparations and deployment lay outside their concerns.

<sup>3</sup>D. Loades, *John Dudley, Duke of Northumberland, 1504–1553* (Oxford, 1996), esp. pp. 57–73, which contains authority for much of what is summarised in this introduction. Dudley's naval achievements are duly recognised in D. Wilson, *The Uncrowned Kings of England: The Black Legend of the Dudleys* (London, 2005), pp. 122–31.

<sup>4</sup>*The Hamilton Papers. Letters and Papers illustrating the Political Relations of England and Scotland in the 16th Century, formerly in the possession of the Duke of Hamilton now in the British Museum*, ed. J. Bain (Edinburgh, 1890–92).

documents, the chief contemporary source is a printed tract written by an unknown soldier in the English army.<sup>1</sup>

The 1544 campaign was essentially a punitive expedition, the context of which originated in Henry VIII's desire to renew his alliance with the Emperor Charles V by making war on France. An agreement for that purpose had been signed in June 1542, committing Henry to a campaign in France the following summer. The King, however, was mindful of what had happened when he had launched a similar war 30 years before. Louis XII had invoked the 'auld alliance' and the Scots opened a second front by invading Northumberland. This ended with the English victory at Flodden, but Henry VIII did not want the scenario repeated. His quarrel with the papacy put a further strain on Anglo-Scottish relations, since James V had refused all inducements to follow his uncle into schism. Henry therefore decided upon a pre-emptive strike in the north before committing his main army across the Channel. In October 1542, on the pretext that the Scots had failed to give satisfaction for border infringements, Henry launched a brief but immensely destructive raid on the Scottish Lowlands. James responded to this deliberate provocation by sending 20,000 men into the debatable land north of Carlisle. Poorly led and poorly prepared, they were confronted by the smaller but much better equipped and disciplined English force under the command of the Earl of Hertford. The battle of Solway Moss on 25 November was a rout. Many Scottish nobles and lairds were captured and sent south to further Henry's scheme of neutralising Scotland by creating an English party committed to religious reform.

The King had already reshuffled his government in the north. His principal lieutenants, the Dukes of Norfolk and Suffolk, returned to London to prepare for the impending campaign in France, and at the end of October the Warden General of the Marches, the Earl of Rutland, stepped down. Hertford declared his own unsuitability to replace him, and was in any case needed for the French campaign, so on 8 November John Dudley, Viscount Lisle, was named as Warden General and despatched to Newcastle.<sup>2</sup> The news of Solway Moss reached him in the course of his journey, so the first challenge which confronted him on arrival was to deal with the chaotic situation in Scotland. Hertford handed over the command to Lisle on 1 December. A few days later the Queen of Scots, Mary of

<sup>1</sup>*The late expedition in Scotlande, under the erle of Hertforde* (London, 1544); reprinted in A. F. Pollard, *Tudor Tracts 1532–1588* (Westminster, 1903), pp. 37–51.

<sup>2</sup>*LP*, XVII, 1048, 1063–4. Dudley had been created Viscount Lisle on 12 March 1542. The title had previously been held by his mother's second husband, Arthur Plantagenet, who had died on 3 March. Dudley was promoted by the right of his mother as sister and heir to John Grey, Viscount Lisle (d. 1504), but this was nevertheless a new creation: *LP*, XVII, 163.

Guise, gave birth to a daughter, and then James V died, without making any arrangements for a regency for the infant Mary who now succeeded him. In theory, power devolved upon the Great Council of Scotland, but they were not in full control, and Henry's envoy to Edinburgh was murdered by English renegades. Lisle dissuaded the King from seeking vengeance, on the grounds that it was not conducive to his honour to make war upon 'a dead body, or a widow, or a suckling'.<sup>1</sup> On 1 January 1543 the Council of Scotland named the Earl of Arran, James Hamilton, as protector during Mary's minority. Henry, who thought he should have been consulted, despatched the Scots lords taken at Solway Moss back to their homes, having extracted an oath of 'assurance' from them to support his interest in Scotland. That was now directed to no less than a matrimonial union of the crowns, an idea which seems to have arisen as soon as it was clear that James had been succeeded by an infant girl. Henry's son and heir, Edward, was by this time five years old, and the attractions of such a union from the English point of view are clear enough. The Scots were understandably less enthusiastic, but in no position to resist pressure, diplomatic or otherwise. Cardinal Beaton, who had been James V's mentor, was placed under house arrest; but this was little more than a gesture and his influence remained strong, not least because the 'English connexion' was rightly seen as aimed at ecclesiastical changes.

Because of his desire to exploit this golden opportunity, Henry's preparations for a campaign in France were effectively derailed, much to the Emperor's annoyance. There were rumours of French plans to intervene in the north, but for the time being it looked as though Arran would have time to sell the marriage in Scotland. On 27 May Henry renewed his treaty with an increasingly anxious Emperor, and in June Arran at last sent envoys south to negotiate the marriage. The Anglo-Scottish treaty of Greenwich was signed on 1 July, and it appeared that Henry had got his way. The reality was rather different, because Arran faced increasing intransigence in Scotland, and although he ratified the Greenwich treaty on 25 August, the gesture meant little. Faced with the likelihood of civil war in Scotland, Henry abandoned his plans for a French campaign that year, and instructed Suffolk to mobilise an army to support Arran against his enemies. However, before any action could be taken, Arran had changed sides, and the situation became so confused that there was little point in seeking to intervene. An English party remained in Scotland, but it was not strong enough to prevent the Scottish parliament from formally repudiating the treaty with England in December, and

<sup>1</sup>LP, XVII, 1221.

renewing the French alliance. A year after Solway Moss Henry had gained precisely nothing, and his northern border was actually more insecure than it had been in 1542.

Meanwhile, in January Lisle had replaced Hertford as Lord Admiral,<sup>1</sup> and also became a member of the Privy Council. For about three months he continued to double this post with that of Warden General, and remained in the north. This made some sense, as most of his Admiralty concerns at that time related to the north-east. However, by 21 April he was back in London, and at Windsor on the 23rd he was elected to the Order of the Garter. On the 19th Lord Parr of Kendal was briefed as his replacement in the Marches. During the second half of 1543, Lisle was mostly occupied about his business as Lord Admiral. In June the English fleet was mobilised in the Narrow Seas against the French [1], and on the 15th he briefed Sir Rhys Mansell as his Vice-Admiral, with instructions to 'go upon' the French but to refrain from molesting any ships of Spain, Flanders, Portugal – or Scotland [3]. At the end of June the French ambassador was given an ultimatum which was virtually a declaration of war, and Lisle's attention was concentrated upon the defence of Calais. With the Scottish commissioners negotiating at Greenwich, his communications with Parr on the borders were largely a matter of courtesy. On 12 July, a few weeks after the letter here printed [4], the King married Parr's sister Catherine, Lady Latimer, and the Warden General entered the charmed ranks of the royal family. On 6 July Mansell fought an inconclusive skirmish with a small French fleet, which was apparently patrolling with no particular objective in mind, and suffered a modest amount of damage to his ships [5, 6]. Another squadron under William Woodhouse arrived back into the Thames in November, very much the worse for wear.<sup>2</sup> Meanwhile a privateering campaign had been launched: at first by individual letters of marque, such as those issued to Miles Middleton on 4 August [7]. Then on 20 December the licence was made general by proclamation.<sup>3</sup> This was virtually all that Henry managed to accomplish to honour his treaty with the Emperor, because the difficulties outlined by Lisle in his letter of 7 November [8] seem to have prevented the attack upon the French fishing fleet which the King plainly intended.

By January 1544 the English party in Scotland was represented by the Earls of Angus and Lennox, as much out of antipathy to Arran as any

<sup>1</sup>In effect he replaced Lord Russell, since Hertford held the post for only a few weeks.

<sup>2</sup>*LP*, XVIII, ii, 437.

<sup>3</sup>*Documents relating to Law and Custom of the Sea*, ed. R. G. Marsden, I (NRS, XLIX, 1895), pp. 155–8. *Tudor Royal Proclamations*, ed. P. L. Hughes and J. F. Larkin, I (New Haven and London, 1969), no. 243 (pp. 245–6).

affection for Henry's policies, and the King was bent upon a focused revenge for the 'betrayal' affected by the Scots parliament and Arran's defection. He decided that there would be little point in attempting to target the estates of the chief defectors, and that what was called for was a direct attack upon Edinburgh. Nor was there much point in trying to use Angus and Lennox as instruments. Even if willing, they lacked the power. Moreover he was not disposed to trust any Scots after his experience with the 'assured' lords; so this would be an English military operation on a substantial scale. By the end of January he had nominated Suffolk to carry out an 'enterprise' in March which would deploy 15,000 men, as well as placing an additional 2,000 in the border garrisons. On 2 February Suffolk accepted the mission, and asked that Hertford and Lisle (or Parr) should accompany him;<sup>1</sup> it was even rumoured that the King would take the field in person. This was probably never part of his intention, and after a few weeks he had modified his plans. Henry had decided to go instead to France, and Suffolk would be needed to accompany him. The Duke was therefore relieved of his command in the north, and Hertford was appointed in his place. This necessitated delaying the campaign for several weeks, and it was not until 21 March that Lisle set off for Harwich to muster the ships which were going to be needed for transport and support operations [9]. The Bishop of Winchester, Stephen Gardiner, and William Paulet, Lord St John, were two of those commissioned to provide the support services for the expedition, and their letter of 24 March [10] gives some idea of the difficulties they were facing, both in assembling the ships and (particularly) in providing adequate victuals.

It had been decided to attack Edinburgh direct, bringing in the English force by sea, and this necessitated the muster which was assembling at Newcastle awaiting the ships which were coming from Harwich and the Thames. Bad weather disrupted their sailing, and at the end of March Hertford reported that, while he had almost all his troops, he had only a few of the ships [11]. If they did not arrive soon the waiting soldiers would have consumed all the victuals which had been provided for the campaign. The speed with which the Council's letters travelled is surprising, since it took less than three days to bring them from London to Newcastle, a distance of 274 miles. To have covered that distance using post horses seems almost incredible; but if a fast sailing boat was used,<sup>2</sup> why did it not suffer from the same adverse weather conditions as the rest of the ships? Meanwhile, Hertford and his associates could only wait. The wind turned fair at the beginning of April, and the *Sweepstake*, which had run

<sup>1</sup>LP, XIX, i, 86.

<sup>2</sup>The Tudor Navy had no dedicated 'advice boats'.

aground at the entrance to the Tyne, was safely brought into harbour; but the rest of the fleet did not arrive, and Hertford feared that the opportunity for a surprise attack was rapidly disappearing [12]. It was not until 20 April that Lisle and the remaining ships eventually reached the Tyne. When they were all assembled, there should have been, according to the original plans, upwards of 160 sail, most of them being small ships, designed to carry horses and supplies rather than men and guns [13]. However, the plans had evidently been changed, because only 68 ships feature in the estimated accounts prepared at that time [14]. Eleven of these belonged to the King, and were fighting ships; the other 57 had been 'taken up' – some English, some foreign-owned – and were paid tonnage. As the average burthen of these ships was over 100 tons, it had presumably been decided to use fewer and larger transports.<sup>1</sup> There were no complaints, either then or later, about the ships, but the victualling left a lot to be desired. Apparently the suppliers were providing short weight, and Gardiner, who should have been ensuring that the rules were obeyed, was doing no such thing. How far these complaints were justified, and how far they were part of a politically motivated attempt to undermine the bishop's credit with the King, is a matter of controversy.<sup>2</sup> As there were no further complaints, and the validity of these cannot be tested, the matter remains in doubt.

Finally, the expedition was ready to embark. Although some of the warships had still not arrived, that did not immediately matter. The priority was to get the men into the transports [15, 17]. On 28 April Hertford issued his fleet and battle orders, outlining the command structure and methods of signalling, with directions for rendezvous if the fleet should be disrupted by storms. These orders occupy a transitional phase between the instructions drafted by the future Lord Audley in 1530 and those Lisle himself would issue in 1545.<sup>3</sup> Hertford's instructions are specific to an amphibious operation, the main purpose of which was to land troops. Even so, it is notable that, although the Lord Admiral was at sea in person, he commanded only the 'vanward', wearing his cross of St George at the fore. Hertford, as Lieutenant General,<sup>4</sup> was also fleet commander, with

<sup>1</sup>The average tonnage declared for the English ships was about 85 tons, and for the 'strangers' nearly 150 tons [14].

<sup>2</sup>G. Redworth, *In Defence of the Church Catholic: The Life of Stephen Gardiner* (Oxford, 1990), pp. 210–12.

<sup>3</sup>*Fighting Instructions, 1530–1816*, ed. J. Corbett (NRS, XXIX, 1905), pp. 15–17 (Audley), 23–4 (Lisle); the latter also in *The Anthony Roll of Henry VIII's Navy*, ed. C. S. Knighton and D. M. Loades (NRS Occasional Publ. 1, 2000), p. 159.

<sup>4</sup>At this time 'Lieutenant General' was a post, the significant word being Lieutenant, as opposed to the modern rank of Lieutenant-General, in which the substantive is 'General' and 'Lieutenant' the qualifier.

his St George's cross at the main [16]. In Lisle's instructions of the following year squadronal organisation is first seen in its enduring form, establishing the positions and masthead flags of Admiral, Vice-Admiral and Rear Admiral.<sup>1</sup>

When everyone was aboard, and all orders issued, they still struggled to get out of the Tyne, and on 1 May were still trying. Hertford had about 12,000 men with him in the fleet, and another 4,000 had been sent overland via Haddington. If the expedition was to be properly co-ordinated, it was imperative to get to sea, and some time late on the 1st or early on the 2nd they succeeded, landing opposite Inchkeith, about two miles from Leith, on the 3rd [18, 19]. The command structure of the fleet was transferred to land, with the Lord Admiral again leading the van – demonstrating that, important though his Navy appointment was, he was still primarily a soldier [20]. Leith was found to be unexpectedly rich (a reflection perhaps of English perceptions of Scotland, rather than of outstanding wealth), and was comprehensively plundered. Hertford was mindful of his instructions, and would accept no surrender on terms from the neighbouring city of Edinburgh, his intention being rather to destroy it. Meanwhile, on his orders, his warships took and destroyed such forts and other strong places as they could find in the vicinity, meeting little in the way of effective resistance. Two days later, he wrote a second circumstantial account [21] to Secretary Paget, making fun of the cardinal's unheroic conduct and fancy clothes. However, if his figures were accurate, Beaton and his forces would hardly have stood a chance against the invader, and it may well be that his appearing was a mere diversion. Later on the same day, 8 May, Lisle attacked the main gate of Edinburgh, blowing it in with a culverin. There was some fierce resistance, which is glossed over in the reports, and the English sustained some casualties, but the city was taken with relative ease.<sup>2</sup> The castle held out, and Hertford did not have either the time or the equipment for a prolonged siege, so its guns inflicted some damage on the invaders, but could not save the city from the torches which were applied to it over the next few days. Meanwhile the English cavalry raided as far as the gates of Stirling, burning and destroying everything in their path [22]. Having similarly torched Leith, on 15 May the English retreated, the army going overland because there was now little chance of ambush or resistance, and the fleet, laden with plunder and captured ordnance, returning in the way which it had come, and doing such damage as it could on the way, particularly to St Andrews, Beaton's metropolitan

<sup>1</sup>Cf. T. Wilson, *Flags at Sea* (2nd edn, London, 1999), pp. 13–14.

<sup>2</sup>Sir J. Balfour Paul, 'Edinburgh in 1544 and Hertford's Invasion', *Scottish Historical Review*, 8 (1910–11), pp. 113–31.

see. The posts must again have flown between Leith and London, because as early as 15 May the Council was appraised of the taking of Edinburgh, and in sending its congratulations to the commanders, also sent instructions for the subsequent deployment of their forces [23]. Some were to remain in garrison in the north, and some to be despatched forthwith to Calais. By 18 May both the army and the fleet were back at Berwick, and Lisle with the core of his fleet immediately headed south to join the ships already deployed in the Narrow Seas [24]. On the 19th Hertford reported to the King, especially commending Lisle's good service [25].

The final account was drawn up on 8 June [26]. The whole campaign was deemed to have lasted 53 days and the naval costs to have amounted to a little over £2,000, not counting the 11 foreign-owned vessels which had been discharged immediately after their return to Newcastle. By the standards of the time, the operation had been a model of economy and efficiency. The impact upon Scotland was less dramatic than might have been expected. Both Arran and Beaton were substantially discredited, and a special convention summoned to Stirling in June transferred the governorship to the Queen Mother. This was a slight improvement from the English point of view, because Mary of Guise was able to work with Angus and Lennox in a way which neither Arran nor Beaton could have done. Henry continued to rely on Lennox, and up to a point he was justified, because Mary made no move in support of France when the King finally led his invasion force against Boulogne in July 1544. On the other hand, the treaty of Greenwich remained a dead letter, and the main objective of Henry's northern policy since the end of 1542 was no nearer realisation after this incursion than it had been before. The proceedings certainly gratified the King, and significantly strengthened the position of Hertford and Lisle in domestic politics during the remainder of his reign. Yet despite the commanders' confidence that the Scots would not recover in their lifetimes [22], three years later the tactic had to be repeated to even more crushing effect. When Hertford (by then Duke of Somerset) led this further invasion in 1547, he built on the experience of this earlier campaign – not least in its naval aspects – to achieve the victory of Pinkie.

### Acknowledgements

Crown copyright documents are reproduced by permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. We are grateful to Mr A. H. Lawes for enabling our access to original State Papers no longer housed at Kew. We are grateful to the Most Honourable the Marquess of Salisbury

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### Editorial Conventions

Roman text within square brackets supplies text lost by mutilation or otherwise illegible. Words in italic within square brackets are editorial explanations. Some familiar Latin *formulae* are left intact and italic, and a few original forms are shown within single quotation marks. Otherwise the text is modernised according to usual NRS practice: that is to say, spelling is modernised, but some obsolete but distinct forms are retained. Material printed in original spelling in the *Hamilton Papers* has been checked against the originals now in the British Library. Very few misreadings were detected, and only those of substance are noted here, along with scribal changes not recorded in the previous versions.

### Bibliographical Abbreviations

APC	<i>Acts of the Privy Council of England</i> , new series, ed. J. R. Dasent (London, 1890–1907)
CSP Span.	<i>Calendar of Letters, Despatches, and State Papers, relating to the Negotiations between England and Spain</i> , ed. G. A. Bergenroth et al. (London, 1862–1954)
<i>Hamilton Papers</i>	<i>Letters and Papers illustrating the political relations of England and Scotland in the 16th century, formerly in the possession of the Duke of Hamilton, now in the British Museum</i> , ed. J. Bain (Edinburgh, 1890–92)
'Haynes, <i>State Papers</i>	S. Haynes and W. Murdin, <i>Collection of State Papers ... left by William Cecil, Lord Burghley</i> (London, 1740–59)
HHSA	Vienna, Haus-, Hof- und Staatsarchiv
<i>Hist. Parl.</i>	The History of Parliament, <i>The House of Commons, 1509–1558</i> , ed. S. T. Bindoff (London, 1982)
HMC, <i>Salisbury MSS</i>	Historical Manuscripts Commission, <i>Calendar of the Manuscripts of the Most Hon. the Marquis of Salisbury, K.G., etc., preserved at Hatfield House</i> (1883– )

<i>Lisle Letters</i>	<i>The Lisle Letters</i> , ed. M. St C. Byrne (Chicago, 1981)
<i>LP</i>	<i>Letters and Papers, Foreign and Domestic, of the Reign of Henry VIII</i> , ed. J. S. Brewer, J. Gairdner and R. H. Brodie (London, 1862–1932)
<i>ODNB</i>	<i>Oxford Dictionary of National Biography</i> , ed. H. C. G. Matthew and B. Harrison (Oxford, 2004)
<i>OED</i>	<i>Oxford English Dictionary</i>
<i>State Papers</i>	<i>State Papers, during the Reign of Henry the Eighth</i> (Record Commission, 1830–52)

### 1. *Lisle to the Council Attendant*

London

14 June 1543

These may be to advertise your Lordships that I have received your letters this present 14th of June, dated at St Osyth the 13th of the same; and forthwith I repaired to my Lords of the Council,<sup>1</sup> and had William Gonson<sup>2</sup> with me, to declare unto them the state of the four other ships that now is preparing by the King's Majesty's commandment to the seas, the which four ships (if the captains named in your said letters be in like readiness, as thereof I am in doubt) we will deliver unto them full equipped and ready victualled and manned for one month. But where your Lordships appointeth Sir Rhys Mansell<sup>3</sup> to be Vice-Admiral, John Carey,<sup>4</sup> Baldwin Willoughby<sup>5</sup> and my fellow Jennings<sup>6</sup> to be captains, they being as yet scantily warned of the King's Majesty's pleasure in that behalf, I think their repairing to London and there the trimming of them with such necessities as they I am sure would be glad to have, it will ask some time. Sir Rhys Mansell is here in the town, but I have not as yet spoken with him, albeit he shall know this night the King's pleasure or [*before*] I sleep. As for Baldwin Willoughby, John Carey and John Jennings, I hear no word of them. And

<sup>1</sup>That is, the larger body of Privy Councillors remaining at Westminster; Lisle was not among those attending their formal meeting on 14 June, as listed in *APC*, I, p. 145.

<sup>2</sup>Keeper of the Storehouses at Erith and Deptford from 1524 to his death in 1544, and in effect the principal official of the Navy.

<sup>3</sup>Welsh soldier and administrator, married to one of Princess Mary's ladies in waiting: *ODNB*.

<sup>4</sup>Gentleman of the Privy Chamber.

<sup>5</sup>Captain of the *New Bark*.

<sup>6</sup>John Jennings, Gentleman of the Privy Chamber, knighted during the Scottish expedition of the following year (11 May).

where your Lordships writeth that you have taken order with Mr Bryan<sup>1</sup> for the sending up of 200 of the mariners now dispatched at Hull, and that I should not dispatch the mariners of Harwich coast, till the said mariners be come from Hull, it may please you therein to consider that, if the King's Majesty's ships shall be stayed here till the coming hither of the said mariners from Hull, it will be longer time or [*before*] the said four ships can be set forth than I did write of in my former letters to Mr Bryan, which was that, at the furthest, they should be ready to go forth the latter end of this next week. But, my Lords, the matter is now so advanced that the ships shall be full ready upon Monday next, as before is said, if we may have the said captains ready to put into them. And in case that the mariners do come from Hull before the captains will be in a readiness to enter into the ships, then I will return as many of the said mariners to Harwich again. And where your Lordships writeth unto me that the King's Majesty's pleasure is that when Baldwin Willoughby and the other three captains do come unto me, I should instruct every of them, after my discretion and wisdom, for the execution of such charge as shall be committed unto them: my Lords, it shall be most requisite that the King's Majesty's instructions for Sir Rhys Mansell (who is appointed for this time Vice-Admiral) be devised by your Lordships, and to be signed by the King's Majesty, and to be sent hither with speed; and that done, I shall endeavour myself, as far as my poor wit and discretion will serve, to give them the best advice that I can, albeit that I know it right well I had more need to be instructed in suchlike case by some of them than they by me. And thus I commit your Lordships to the tuition of Almighty God. At London, the 14th of June.

Your Lordships' assured, John Lisle.

Beseeching your Lordships that when you have perused the contents of this letter, it may please you to make my friend Mr Bryan participant to the same.

## 2. *Lisle to the Council Attendant*

London

15 June 1543

After my hearty commendations, these may be to advertise your Lordships that, where the King's Majesty's pleasure is I should cause (as I might conveniently) the Admiral of Sluys to be advertised in what place his Majesty's ships do keep, it may please you to have in remembrance that

<sup>1</sup>Sir Francis Bryan, Gentleman of the Privy Chamber, with naval command experience dating from 1513, and appointed Lisle's Vice-Admiral in the North Sea earlier in 1543: *Hist. Parl.*, I, pp. 527–9.

yesterday [I] wrote my letters to your Lordships [*above*] for to have instructions signed by the King's Majesty wherein as well the limits which his Highness's pleasure may be that his Grace's ships shall keep, as also how they shall behave themselves to all other nations, and until your Lordships do send the said instructions, I cannot well give any advertisement to the said Admiral of Sluys<sup>1</sup> in that behalf. Also [my] Lords, I did advertise Mr Bryan by my letters of the 13th of this present of the coming of Thomas Wyndham<sup>2</sup> from the west seas and of his chief errand hither, for the w[hich], if he or his Admiral<sup>3</sup> that sent him had well considered the matter, he might as well have tarried there with his charge. Also I further advertised Mr Bryan of the report that the said Wyndham giveth his Admiral, and as he saith it is the only desire of the residue of the captains there; and if that be true, surely he is not meet to have such a charge. Furthermore, Wyndham saith they shall never do the King's Majesty any great service lying where they do. Wherefore, considering that the Frenchmen beginneth to pour out ships as they do, I think the said four ships, if it may so stand with the King's Majesty's pleasure, should do his Highness better service to join with his Grace's other ships that goeth now to the sea, and so they shall be a great conserve together, and within a while (I think) will make clean seas. Of these things I require you I may have answer. And also the King's Majesty's instructions to be sent hither for the direction of Sir Rhys Mansell, whom his Majesty sendeth at this present with ten ships to the seas as his Grace's Vice-Admiral. And also that your Lordships will n[ot] forget to send the warrant again sealed to William Gonson. Further it may please your Lordships to understand that here is lately arrived in Thames a great Spanish ship that came within these nine days out of Spain, and they that are come in her saith that at his coming away, there was 16 sail of great ships ready armed to come their ways towards Flanders, and in them cometh 7,000 footmen, Spaniards, to join with the Emperor's army in Flanders. Other news I hear none among the strangers worthy the writing. Thus I beseech Our Lord have your Lordships in His blessed keeping. At London the 15th of June.

Your Lordships' assured [friend], John Lisle.

<sup>1</sup>Maximilian de Bourgogne, Sieur de Beures et de Veere; the post, also called Admiral of Flanders, was a senior office of state, equivalent to Lord Admiral in England.

<sup>2</sup>Servant of Cromwell, later prominent as Vice-Admiral and Master of Naval Ordnance (1547) and leader of Guinea voyage (1553).

<sup>3</sup>John Wynter (so suggested in *LP*): Bristol merchant and sea captain, father of Sir William; himself called 'Treasurer for Sea Causes' or 'Paymaster' after the death of William Gonson in 1544 until his own death in the following year.

3. *Mansell's instructions*

[1543]

... and officers of the same ports, not only to keep the said prizes surely, but also to see the goods safely kept to his Majesty's use without embezzlement, as they will answer at their extreme perils, and that they shall upon the receipt of any such prize, give advertisement thereof, and of the particulars of the goods, merchandise and ordnance in her, to the High Admiral of England accordingly. And the King's Majesty's pleasure is that the said Sir Rhys shall not take any ship of Scotland, Portugal, Spain or Flanders, or any of the Emperor's subjects, unless they shall have done some hurt and damage before to his Majesty's subjects, or that he shall find and perceive that they would convey any men, munition or victual into France, in which case he shall do his best to apprehend them and see them kept in surety, to the strength and commodity of his Majesty's Navy, till upon advertisement of the case he shall know his Majesty's pleasure in that behalf. Neither the said Sir Rhys shall not meddle with any Danes ('Danskens') or ships of Eastland unless they be equipped for the war or have offended his Majesty as is aforesaid, except he shall chance to encounter any ship that belongeth to the King of Denmark himself, which he shall specially examine for news, and search the same as of himself for letters. And if he shall find anything worthy suspicion, then to detain the same, and further to use them as he shall see cause and think convenient, forseeing ever that there be no spoil or embezzlement of the goods being in any ship, Frenchman, Breton or others, which he shall take, nor in any wise that ... use those which be not Frenchmen or Breton ... [*remainder lost by mutilation*].

4. *Lisle to Lord Parr of Kendal*<sup>1</sup>

Greenwich  
20 June 1543

My very good Lord, in my most hearty wise I have me recommended unto you, certifying the same that I have received your letters the date of the 11th of this month, most heartily thanking you for your gentle remembrance therein, and also for your goodness showed to my poor servants, the which your Lordship hath taken unto you for the time of your abode there. Trusting that if you have any affairs or business, they will do your Lordship

<sup>1</sup>Later Marquess of Northampton; brother of the King's fiancé Catherine (whom he married on 12 July).

acceptable service. And where your Lordship desireth to hear of such news as be in these parts, the same shall understand that the King's Majesty is in prosperous health, laud and praises be unto Almighty God therefor. His Majesty is newly come from Harwich, where his Highness hath perused and seen two notable havens, and specially the water that is called Colne<sup>1</sup> contenteth his Highness best. And where I did write unto your Lordship that it was like to grow to war with France, the same is now intimated, and at this present the King's Majesty sendeth Mr Treasurer<sup>2</sup> to Guînes with 4,000 footmen and 500 horsemen, and Sir Rhys Mansell is gone to the seas with ten of the King's Majesty's ships. This is for a beginning, and by that time that the Emperor be come into Flanders, who is by this past Italy, and is arrived already in Germany ['Almayne'], making great diligence to come into Flanders, I suppose you shall hear of a greater going both to the land and also to the sea. Other news here is none, but that my Lady Latimer, your sister and Mistress Herbert<sup>3</sup> be both here in the Court with my Lady Mary's grace and my Lady Elizabeth. And as I shall have any news worth the writing from time to time, I will visit you with my rude letters. I have also made your recommendations according as your letter purposed, and to divers others of your friends, of whom there be numbers that desireth your short return out of those quarters if it may please the King's Majesty. And thus my very good Lord I bid you as heartily well to fare as your own most gentle heart can wish. At Greenwich the 20th of June.

Your Lordship's assured loving friend and brother, John Lisle.

### 5. *Sir Rhys Mansell to Lisle*

At sea  
9 July 1543

Pleaseth it your Lordship to be advertised that on Friday the 6th day of this July in the evening, lying in the bottom of the sea, we descried sixteen sails, whereupon we consulted that night to lie in their way with small sails, and in the break of the day we were within two leagues of the French fleet, who kept themselves round together; and betwixt 4 or 5 of the clock in the morning we joined with them and beat they as we could best with our artillery, and so did they in like wise very freshly all ways, the great

<sup>1</sup>For the short-lived naval dockyard on the River Colne, see E. P. Dickin, *A History of Brightlingsea: a Member of the Cinque Ports* (Brightlingsea, 1913), pp. 139–42.

<sup>2</sup>The Treasurer of the Household, Sir Thomas Cheyne; command notified by the Council Attendant to the Councillors in Westminster 9 June: *LP*, XVIII, i, 675.

<sup>3</sup>The future Queen (widow of John, Lord Latimer) and her sister Anne, married to William Herbert, future Earl of Pembroke.

ships being betwixt us and the lesser sort. Wherein we continued above three hours. so that about 8 of the clock the *Minion* tried out the *Sacre* of Dieppe, who bare their flag, and had her in chase, and ever was cast alee till we cut off the boat, and they [went *deleted*] weigh upon her so that about 11 of the clock we were as good as the said *Sacre*, and so laid her aboard and fought a good time as we best could, and they killed and hurt divers of my men; all ways the *Sacre* was ready to tack about, and so share [*sheared*] off, and gat upon us, and yet [*we*] recovered and laid her aboard, and sore beat her with our ordnance, so that I reckon she shall this [season *deleted*] time do little service. And with that came the *Primrose*, who in like wise laid her aboard, and for lack of grapples and good men could not recover her. I reckon the King's Majesty was never worse [furnished *deleted*] provided of his men than his Grace hath been at this time. And though that the said *Sacre* did shear off, yet we weigh upon her and laid her aboard the third time, which I reckon to be about 3 or 4 of the clock, and so brake her that if I had had 24 lusty able men I had recovered her. At which time the *Primrose* was cast far alee, and five Frenchmen coming freshly to her rescue, so that I was enforced to give her over and to draw to my company, who had been in the chase of other ships. Assuring your Lordship that the French ships are very good sailers, and the galley hath taken an hoy bark, having 120 men, whereby she was cast alee, so that I cannot advertise your Lordship thereof. All my small shot was consumed, and the gunners being of that sort that very few of them could or can do any good; and besides that, for lack of cognisance one of our men killeth another, to the great discomfort of men to enter.

On Sunday in the morning eleven sails of the Frenchmen plied themselves northward. and to the intent to refresh, we [*misplaced*] with new men did ply towards the Foreland, and there this morning have received your Lordship's letters, the tenor whereof we will follow to the best we can, if the said ships do ply homewards. Yet the masters do determine that they are a kenning by north us, or else they are gone to Scotland again; whereof I would be very sorry, in trust to speak with them or [*i.e. before*] they pass. And thus Jesus preserve your good Lordship. From the sea, the 9th day of July.

My Lord, the *Minion*'s mainmast and foremast is so sore perished and their sails and also divers pieces broken, which must be changed. I cannot well bear any topsail. The mainmast is swathed [*'swested'*] and the foremast shall be holpen as well as may be. I humbly beseech your good Lordship that I may have ten good gunners and forty or fifty good forward men, and in the mean time I will do the best I can. The masts may be holpen with a week's work in smooth water.

Your Lordship's to command, R. Mansell.

My Lord, I must needs have new mainsails, foresails, with bonnets for the same, and that it may be good canvas – it is too much shame to see the canvas that is withinboard – and one anchor; item, 3 slings, 2 port-pieces, dice, and lead for single bases, great tampions for port-pieces, and 10 or 12 half barrels of good powder – that I have is not good; lead for the ship's store, to staunch the leaks there is none unoccupied withinboard.

## 6. *Lisle to the King*

Greenwich  
11 July 1543

Pleaseth it your Majesty to be advertised that Sir Rhys Mansell with his company have met with the fleet of French ships, with whom the same have had a great fight, as by the contents ['contynew'] of his letter, of the 9th of this month it doth appear, which herewith your Majesty shall receive. They were so few and their enemies so many (which also kept so good order) that they could never get vantage upon them. The *Sacre* of Dieppe was among them, which was thrice laid aboard with the *Minion* and once with the *Primrose* and at all times she share off and escaped. The rest of your Highness's ships fell in chase with others of the French ships, but they could not attain them, saving the *Less Galley* hath taken a hoy bark of the same company with six score men in her; and albeit they have taken no more of them, yet being so few against so many, they have made a great sparkle among them and stopped them their passage. By reason whereof, if they intend to go homeward they must once again light in their laps or else draw northwards again to Scotland. Your Majesty's other ships of the Narrow Seas was not come to Sir Rhys Mansell, yet had they two letters sent unto them for that purpose. I have sent letters again to the said Sir Rhys Mansell that he shall send the captain of the said hoy bark and two or three of the best of his company up by post to your Majesty, which thing I marvel they have so omitted. And what your Highness's pleasure shall be for further proceeding in this matter, your Majesty's pleasure therein known, the same shall be accomplished with all possible diligence. Here is presently ready to go forth the *Galley Subtle* and two of the French prizes, but the men which be taken up in haste about this town be but loiterers and idle fellows, and when it cometh to the point that service should be done, they do but deceive your Majesty, as knoweth Our Lord, who ever preserve your most excellent Majesty in long and prosperous felicity. From Greenwich this present Wednesday at two of the clock at afternoon.

Your Majesty's most humble and obedient subject and servant, John Lisle.

7. *Letters of Marque from Lisle for Miles Middleton of Hull*<sup>1</sup>

London

4 August 1543

John, Viscount Lisle, Baron of Malpas and Somerey, Knight of the noble order of the Garter, Lord Bassett and Tyasse,<sup>2</sup> one of the King's most honourable Council, High Admiral of England, Ireland, Wales, the town and marches of Calais, Normandy, Gascony and Guyenne, and Captain General of the King's Majesty's Navy Royal, to all his Grace's Admirals, Vice-Admirals, men-of-war, captains, petty captains, soldiers, and all other his Highness's officers, ministers and subjects, as well upon the sea as upon the land, to whom these present letters shall come, or the same shall hear, see or read, and to every of them, greeting. Know ye that his Majesty royal hath licensed Miles Middleton, one of the yeoman of his Grace's guard, to repair to the sea with two ships from his Majesty's port of Hull or other places near thereunto adjoining, and fourscore men, mariners, gunners and soldiers, in either of the same two ships, furnished with ordnance, artillery and victuals for the wars at the proper costs, adventure and charges of the said Miles Middleton and his companions, adventurers with him, well and faithfully to serve his Majesty against his enemies and their adherents for the more damage and greater annoyance of them, and the same enemies with all and singular their adherents, aiders and comforters, their ships, vessels and goods, to search out, seek, invade, apprehend and take wheresoever they may be founden. In consideration whereof the said Miles Middleton is bounden before us in the King's Majesty's principal Court of his Grace's High Admiralty of England to bring on land within his Grace's realm or dominions all such prizes, booties and purchases as shall be gotten with the said ships and company, and either of them, of any of his Majesty's enemies and of their adherents, aiders or comforters, without breaking up of any bulks, coffers, trusses, packs, dryfats, or other secrets being within any the said prizes which shall be by them or any of them apprehended or taken. And that neither the same Miles Middleton nor any other captain, master, mariner, soldier,

<sup>1</sup>Middleton may have been seeking revenge for his own loss in 1537, when cloth he was shipping from Hull was wrongly taken by a French privateer: *Lisle Letters*, IV, pp. 273–4. It is unclear why this original document is retained in the State Papers. Possibly it was never dispatched, perhaps overtaken by the general privateering licence proclaimed in December. Alternatively, it may have been called in when Middleton was himself convicted by the Admiralty Court in 1546, and the sentence was confirmed by the Privy Council: *APC*, I, p. 513.

<sup>2</sup>Only the viscountcy of Lisle and the Garter were actually conferred by the Crown; the other titles were assumed (that of Somerey appearing here for the first time): J. H. Round, 'Notes on the Lord Great Chamberlain's case', *The Ancestor*, IV (Jan. 1903), p. 9.

gunner or other person of the said ships or either of them, of what degree or condition soever he be of, shall put to sale, cloyne or give or cause to be put to sale, given or cloyned any part or parcel of any such prizes, nor presume to cast overboard nor rend any letters, instruments or other writings found in the same until it be signified to us or our officers in that behalf specially assigned and appointed, under the pains and forfeitures limited to the same Miles Middleton in that behalf. We therefore, in his Majesty's name, by these our letters straitly charge and command you and every of you that ye do not let, molest, trouble, hinder or disturb the said Miles Middleton or the said two ships, or either of them, their captains, masters, mariners, gunners nor soldiers, nor any of them, nor any the victuals, ordnances, munitions or other furnitures appertaining to either of the same ships, but rather will and require you and every of you to assist, aid, help, succour and further the said ships and either of them, their captains, masters, mariners, soldiers and company, in all things requisite and convenient, as reason and favour shall require, so that they, upon reasonable prices pay ready money or otherwise agree with the owners for all things necessary and convenient for them. And furthermore straitly charge and command you and every of you that you do permit and suffer the said two ships, and either of them, their captains, masters and company, and every of them, fully and quietly to enjoy and use all and singular the contents of these presents [*illegible insertion*], as you will answer for the contrary at your perils. And also right entirely require and pray all favourers, friends and allies of his Majesty royal that they will likewise suffer and permit the said ships, and either of them, their captains, masters, mariners and company, freely and quietly to pass by them without any let, trouble, vexation or hindrance. Provided always that neither of the same ships, their captains, masters, mariners, gunners, soldiers or people, nor any of them, do infer or cause to be inferred or done any hurt, prejudice or damage to his Majesty's subjects or to any other his Highness's friends, their allies or subjects, being in amity or liege with his Highness, as they and every of them will answer at their extreme perils for the contrary. And also by these our present letters we do give to the said Miles Middleton, his captains and masters of the said two ships, and to every of them, full power and authority to take, hire and appoint shipmasters, mariners and other persons convenient, able and meet for the said wars to conduct, serve, lead and guide the same two ships and either of them, for wages convenient in that behalf, according to the use and custom of the sea in such cases accustomed, so that the said shipmasters, mariners and other persons be not otherwise deputed or appointed to serve his Majesty or any other of his Highness's loving subjects' necessary business or other affairs for his Grace's wars. And that

by virtue hereof the said Miles Middleton, his captains, masters, or any of them, do not presume to take or press any manner person to serve in either of the said two ships by colour to defraud or take of any such person any sum of money or otherwise molest or grieve any man being not able and meet to serve in the said ships, and either of them, for the purposes and intents beforesaid, as they and every of them will answer at their extreme perils for doing the contrary. Given at London under the great seal of our office of the High Admiralty of England, which in witness of truth we have caused to be put and affixed hereunto, with the subscription of the hand of our notary public and registrar undernamed, the fourth day of August in the year of our Lord God 1543 and the 35th year of the reign of our most excellent sovereign Lord Henry the eight, by the grace of God King of England, France and Ireland, Defender of the Faith, and of the Church of England and also of Ireland in earth the Supreme Head.

*Per Dominum Magnum Admiraliū Anglie. Concordat cum registro*  
Roger Hunt [with his notarial sign].

### 8. *Lisle to Paget*

7 November 1543

Master Secretary, with my hearty commendations, these shall be to advertise you that I have received your letter of the 6th of this present here at the King's Majesty's house at Deptford the 7th of the same at 10th of the clock before noon, with also a letter of William Woodhouse direct unto me, which I perceive the King's Majesty hath [see]n and that his Highness's pleasure is I should with all convenient speed cause to be sent unto the said William Woodhouse the *Pauncy* and the *Less Galley*, whereupon having Mr Gonson and Edward Waters<sup>1</sup> presently with me, we consulted together for the accomplishment of his Majesty's said pleasure. And when we had thoroughly considered the circumstance of everything, with the prolonging of the time the which would be consumed in the rigging, victualling and manning of the said ships, being now in Colne Water, having no hope by any possibility that the said ships could be in readiness to be set forth as to such ships doth appertain in three weeks at the least, by which time it is thought that the chief fishing of the herring fleet will be past, and then his Majesty's enemies thereof in the

<sup>1</sup>Clerk of the King's Ships 1540–44; also Gentleman Usher of the Chamber and Particular Receiver (South Wales) of the Court of Augmentations 1536–44; appointed Sergeant of Arms on resigning his Navy post. He was Gonson's brother-in-law: *LP*, XVI, 379(56); *XX*, i, 282(12). W. C. Richardson, *History of the Court of Augmentations 1534–1554* (Baton Rouge, 1961), 49. *Lisle Letters*, III, p. 316.

mean time to have their full pleasure, and to their no little gain and profit, which were too much pity. I have thought therefore very expedient hereof to advertise the King's Majesty to the intent his Highness may know the difficulty that is thought, concerning the expedition of the setting forth of the said ships and the hindering that might be in that proceeding of his Highness's former purpose, if the whole enterprise should stay upon the coming of these two ships. And forsomuch as it appeareth not to his Majesty by the letter of William Woodhouse sent unto me what company of ships is appointed to his charge for the executing of the said enterprise of the herring fishing, I have sent you herein enclosed a schedule of the names of such ships as now be together under his [Woodhouse's] rule upon the coming away of the *Sweepstake*, which was sore infected with the plague; the which schedule with also the contents hereof I pray you deliver unto his Majesty. The number of ships be 10 sails, the which is thought to us all that be here sufficient for to disturb their fishing, considering that the Frenchmen neither hath nor dare set forth any ship for the wafting of their herring fishing. Other ships ... such as may with all tides and extremities of weather easily [enter into the] havens for succour, which cannot be above 60 or 80 tons at the uttermost. And if his Highness's pleasure be to have the said two ships to be made ready with men and victuals for any other enterprise that his Grace's pleasure is to have done with them, I pray you thereof to advertise me with diligence, and the same with God's leave shall be accomplished accordingly. As for any other ships to be made ready, here is none this side Colne Water but the *Jennet*, the *Lion* and the *Dragon*, and the new ship which came last off the stocks,<sup>1</sup> and three of the prizes [which] came [out] of the West Country. All which ships their furniture will also prolong much time to set any of them forth, specially for any enterprise that may be done upon the said herring fishing. In the lieu of the *Sweepstake* we have sent the ship that was Artigo's,<sup>2</sup> which is a tall bark, and well appointed and trimmed for the purpose. The rest of the prizes that came in with her must have some reparations before they [are] able to go to the sea. Thus I bid you so heartily well to fare, trusting with the leave of God to be at the Court upon Saturday next. If you send any answer unto me, I pray you send it to the Kew, for after the writing hereof I take my horse to go thither again. I tarried [but] one night there, but came early hither the next morning, and here was as much done by Master Gonson as might be done

<sup>1</sup>The ship which remained known simply as the *New Bark*.

<sup>2</sup>The *Lartigue* prize, taken from the French captain Pierre de Bidoux, Sieur de Lartigue: see R. Boulind, 'Ships of private origin in the mid-Tudor Navy: the *Lartigue*, the *Salamander*, the *Mary Willoughby*, the *Bark Aucher* and the *Galley Blanchard*', *MM*, 59 (1973), pp. 386–90.

for the setting forth of the said Artigo's ship; as knoweth God, who keep you. From Deptford this present Wednesday the 7th of November.

Your assured loving friend, John Lisle.

### 9. *Paget to Hertford*

Westminster  
21 March 1544

My duty unto your good Lordship remembered. Albeit I have no great news to write unto you at this present, for all our news now cometh out of those quarters, yet I have thought good to write these two or three words unto you, to do [*sic*, presumably for 'let'] you understand that yesterday my Lord Admiral took his leave of the King's Majesty, and this day departeth towards Harwich. Like as also this day all the ships in the Thames avale outward. I pray God send you and them all good speed. I fear that this loving treaty which we begin to enter now with the Earl of Angus and the rest, as you shall perceive somewhat by the secretary and the priest<sup>1</sup> at their coming to you, shall keep them from doing any good to you at [his *deleted*] your being in Scotland. I pray God to keep them from doing any hurt.

Your Lordship shall receive herewith the great book of the musters, according to your desire; praying your Lordship to send me the names of all the lords that goeth with your Lordship in this journey. And thus I pray God send your Lordship ever as well to do as I would myself. From Westminster the 21st of March at 6 of the clock at night 1544 (1543).

Your Lordship's hearty friend at commandment, William Paget.  
[*Postscript*] I beseech you to have me commended heartily to good Mr Sadler.<sup>2</sup> Your licence is signed; so is not your letter, for the King's Majesty liked not the form I had devised, and I fear you will not like [*illegible btiose word*] His Majesty's device in that matter.

<sup>1</sup>Lennox's secretary Thomas Bishop and Angus's secretary and chaplain, also Henry's chaplain, John Penman *alias* Penven: *LP*, XIX, i, 58, 220 and *passim*.

<sup>2</sup>Sir Ralph Sadler, Privy Councillor and Master of the Great Wardrobe; chief diplomatic agent of the 'rough wooing' in 1543: A. J. Slavin, *Politics and Profit* (Cambridge, 1966), pp. 94–131. *ODNB*.

10. *Gardiner and St John to Hertford*

Westminster  
24 March 1544

After our most hearty commendations to your Lordship. Being the ships departed [*sic*] from this port of London, and the trouble therein somewhat passed over, we have thought good to advertise your Lordship that, albeit we cannot herewith send unto your Lordship the particular declaration of the furniture of every ship in every port (which we trust we may, and with the grace of God shall, within four or five days be able to do), yet nevertheless forsomuch we be assured that there be departed from hence and ready to depart from other ports the number of 160 sail of ships, whereof there go out of the port of London and Colne Water thirteen wafters, the *Lion* prepared to transport your Lordship, as it was said unto us, and with her for scourers three little barks. There be also 28 ships victualled, as the wafters be, for two whole months, ordered and rated to receive into them numbers of soldiers there – the mariners whereof be victualled for seven days; within which time we trust they shall be there and nineteen other ships, whereof some be of 300 and other of lesser tonnage, laden with as much victual in gross as they said they could receive in – the mariners of which ships be victualled for one month, because they should not waste any part of the victuals they carry. There goeth also in company of the same ships 1,800 quarters of meal ready ground, so as, before your Lordship shall see the particular declaration of the furniture of every ship, you may assure yourself of a sufficient furniture for your number of men for 56 days in all kinds of victual, with a great surplusage in certain kinds, as by the particulars which we shall with speed send unto you may appear. Wherein as we may get word from the other ports who have already signified the gross but not the particulars, so shall we not fail to advertise your Lordship accordingly, whom Almighty God preserve and send such speed in this journey as we all desire. At the King's Majesty's Palace of Westminster the 24th of March.

Your Lordship's assuredly, Ste. Winton:, W. St John.

11. *Hertford to the Privy Council*

Newcastle upon Tyne

30 March 1544

After my hearty commendations unto your good Lordships. I have received your letters of the 27th of this present<sup>1</sup> and according to the contents of the same have written to the Earls of Cumberland and Westmorland, and sent the King's Majesty's letters<sup>2</sup> unto them, and likewise shall accomplish the rest of the contents ('contynewe') of your said letters accordingly.

Yesterday arrived in the haven of Tynemouth my Lord William<sup>3</sup> with the *Minion*, Charles Howard<sup>4</sup> with the *Julyan* of Dartmouth and the pinnace which Cavendish<sup>5</sup> made. And this morning came in Jennings with the *Peter of Spayne*, which are all come in safety within the haven. But the *Sweepstake*, through evil chance and great negligence, is in great danger to be utterly lost; which intending to come into the haven also yesternight, and having a fair wind for the same, there fell suddenly a great fog and mist, by mean whereof the master, named Wheler of Lowestoft,<sup>6</sup> missed of the channel of the haven and ran her aground, so that if she had not been a very strong ship she had stricken herself all to pieces. And my Lord Cobham and the rest of the men being within her looked for none other than to have perished, as if the wind had blown strainably it had not been possible that one of them should have escaped. Howbeit, thanked be to God, they came all to land, though very hardly. The ship lieth still on ground, but as much is done as may be to save her, for the which I and Sir Ralph Sadler have been this day at Tynemouth and have taken order for the same; not doubting but that all her ordnance and tackling shall be saved, and as much for the help of the ship also shall be done as is possible; trusting that if there be no great winds between this

<sup>1</sup>LP, XIX, i, 249 [Cecil MSS 231/108; Haynes, *State Papers*, p. 21; HMC, *Salisbury MSS*, I, p. 129].

<sup>2</sup>Also of 27 March: LP, XIX, i, 248 [BL Add. MS 32654, f. 60; *Hamilton Papers*, II, XXX, no. 197(2)].

<sup>3</sup>Lord William Howard, the Duke of Norfolk's half-brother; 1st Lord Howard of Effingham and Lord Admiral 1554, father of the Armada commander.

<sup>4</sup>The Duke's nephew (and brother of the executed Queen Catherine), knighted on 13 May.

<sup>5</sup>LP identifies this as Richard Cavendish, comptroller of the King's Works at Dover; presumably the same man who supplied rigging for the King's ships: cf. D. M. Loades, *The Tudor Navy: an administrative, political and military history* (Aldershot, 1992), pp. 78, 87. The ship seems to be that also known as the *Great Shallop*: LP, XIX, ii, 674 (ff. 28, 36); cf. index (p. 733).

<sup>6</sup>MS. 'Lastof' (reflecting local pronunciation), misread in *Hamilton Papers* as 'Hastof'.

and the spring, which shall begin on Wednesday [3 April], she shall be saved with the grace of God.

My Lord William and my Lord Cobham told me that on Tuesday last [25 March] they departed with my Lord Admiral and others to the number of ten sail out of Harwich, and sailed all together till the Wednesday following at noon, and then the weather began to grow so foul and dark by reason of the great mists that one of them lost another, and therefore, being an order taken amongst them by my said Lord Admiral afore they departed out of Harwich that in case by storm or otherwise they should chance to separate or depart company, then every man should repair to Tynemouth, my said Lords and the others aforesaid are repaired to Tynemouth aforesaid. And yet before her entry into the haven, they say that they sought my Lord Admiral in all parts where they might in the sea, both Thursday, Friday and Saturday, and could not see nor hear of him in no place; which caused them the rather to come into Tynemouth, supposing to have found him there according to his appointment. They say that there is with him (if they chance to keep company together) my Lord Clinton<sup>1</sup> in the *Swallow*, Sir Nicholas Poyntz<sup>2</sup> in the *Great Galley*, Sir Rhys Mansell in a hulk, and Wyndham in a ship of the West Country. As soon as I can hear of them and the rest, I shall advertise the same.

The men appointed to furnish this army do arrive here continually, so that I think tomorrow at night will be the whole number, except some that I have stayed for two or three days longer, so that if the ships arrive not shortly, the King's Majesty shall be put to a great charge in the men's wages for the time they shall remain here on land without doing any service for the same. And also the country is so destitute that they shall not be able to abide here for lack of victuals, which cannot be well eased till the ships do arrive, which I pray God to send shortly. And thus I bid your Lordships most heartily farewell. At Newcastle this Sunday night the 30th of March.

Your good Lordships' assured, E. Hertford.

<sup>1</sup>Created Earl of Lincoln 1572. Lord Admiral 1550–54 and from 1558 to his death in 1585.

<sup>2</sup>Soldier and courtier; Vice-Admiral of the Western Seas 1544: *Hist. Parl.*, III, pp. 148–50 (miscalling the ship here named).

12. *Hertford, Cuthbert Tunstall (Bishop of Durham), Robert Holgate (Bishop of Llandaff) and Sadler to the King*

Newcastle  
4 April 1544

[*After other matter*] Your Majesty's ship called the *Sweepstake* was yesternight (with great labour and diligence used about her) gotten afloat, and this morning brought into the haven of Tynemouth, and it is assuredly promised unto us that within these six days, for the value of £100 at the most, she shall be as well able to do service as ever she was; so that we think she shall be ready in time to serve in this journey, either to go with us or to follow soon after. Whereof we have forborne all this day to advertise your Majesty, supposing that we should have been able to have advertised your Highness therewith some news of my Lord Admiral and the rest of the fleet, which we looked for assuredly at this tide because the wind hath blown so fair these three days. Nevertheless we can hear no manner of word of them, nor any of them, more than before we have advertised; which grieveth us not a little, for here we lie with your Majesty's army, and not only spend your treasure in vain without doing any service, but also consume victuals so fast that unless there come relief very shortly, we shall of [free *deleted*] force be constrained to send away the number that is here far southward into sundry parts where they may best be relieved and holpen with victuals. Assuring your Majesty that the same doth much grieve us at the heart, considering what a goodly opportunity we might have had upon your enemies now that they be, as we understand, assembled with all their power at Glasgow, which is fifty miles almost from Edinburgh. And yet we trust (if the ships come in time, as with the grace of God they must needs, the wind being so fair, be here tomorrow) we shall then redub [*remedy*] this lack that ensueth of their long tarrying; in which part your Majesty shall know, God willing, there shall want no good will and diligence on our behalfs. And thus Almighty God preserve your Majesty in your most royal estate most feliciously to endure. At your Majesty's town of Newcastle the 4th of April at night.

Your Majesty's most humble subjects and most bounden servants, E. Hertford, Cuth. Durham, Robert Llandaff, Ralph Sadler.

13. *Hertford, Lisle, Tunstall, Holgate and Sadler to the King*

Newcastle  
21 April 1544

Please it your Highness to understand that I, the Lord Admiral, arrived here yesterday with the whole fleet, and now we make all the haste we can to set your Majesty's army to the sea; intending with God's grace to omit nothing as much as in us is for the perfection and accomplishment of the charge committed unto us by your Majesty, as to our bounden duties appertaineth. And yet we be somewhat encumbered with the order of victuals provided for the furniture of this enterprise, wherein your Highness's great charge consisteth, and as it appeareth unto us, your Majesty hath not been a little deceived in the same; for as the surveyor of the victuals, called Mr Nevile, declareth unto us, whereas every pipe of beef should contain 400 pieces of beef and every piece to weigh 2 *lb*, after the rate delivered unto him, it is now found and proved that there is lacking in some pipes 140 pieces, in some 80, in some 40, and in some more and some less, so that never a pipe, as far as we can hear, yet keepeth the whole complement. And besides that, the said Nevile saith that there is never a piece of beef almost weigheth past 1½*lb*, and some weigheth not 1 *lb*, whereas every piece should weigh 2 *lb* as is aforesaid; not doubting but that your Majesty hath paid for no less. Also the said Nevile saith that there lacketh of the complement of loaf bread, which as appeareth by such books as were delivered to him, should be here in the victuallers 2,300 dozen, which is a great lack, and a great part of that that is here is so mouldy and ill-husbanded in the baking that, we assure your Highness, at this present it is no man's meat, which we would not believe till we saw it ourselves. And besides all this, the said Nevile telleth us that, whereas it is expressed unto him in the book which he hath received from the Bishop of Winchester where and in what ships the victuals and how much of every kind is bestowed, having made search for the same by the said book, he findeth no part thereof true. So that whether any more of the provisions do want than is afore specified, or be otherwise bestowed in other ships than the book purporteth, it is yet uncertain. The search whereof and the ordering and bestowing of the victuals in every ship that lacketh victualling letteth more time than were expedient, which we shall supply and help as it may, having nevertheless thought it our duties to signify the premises unto your Majesty, lest percase [*perchance*] the deceit be used by the petty ministers appointed by such as have the charge of the provisions of victuals made for the furniture of your royal army into France, if it be not well foreseen.

[*With further complaints about provisioning the army, and diplomatic news.*]

At your Highness' town of Newcastle the 21th of April. [*Postscript omitted.*] Your Majesty's humble subjects and most bounden servants, E. Hertford, John Lisle, Cuth. Durham, Robert Llandaff, Ralph Sadler.

#### 14. *Estimate of a month's naval charges for the expedition*

Westminster  
25 April 1544

*Anno regni regis Henrici octavi xxxvj* to the 25 of April. An estimation of the charges of 11 the King's ships, 35 other English ships out of Thames, and 22 strangers' ships, for one month of 28 days begun the 21 day of March last and ended the 17th day of this present month inclusive; viz.

*11 of the King's ships.* Inprimis, for the diets of six captains serving in six his Grace's own ships, at 18d. the day – £12 12s. More, for wages of 1,561 soldiers, mariners and gunners serving in 11 his Grace's ships, at 5s. every man – £390 5s. More, for 168 deadshares to be divided among the mariners, at 5s. every share – £42. More, for rewards to 119 the gunners – £12 5s. More, for rewards to 11 lodesmen [*in*] the same ships, as 10s. every man – £5 10s. And more for rewards to 9 surgeons in the same ships, at 10s. every man – £4 10s. *Summa* – £467 12s.

*35 English ships.* Item, more for the diets of five captains serving the King in five other English ships appointed wafters, at 18d. the day – £10 10s. More, for wages of 864 soldiers, mariners and gunners serving the King in 35 English ships, at 5s. every man – £216. More, for 289 deadshares to be divided among the mariners, at 5s. every share – £72 5s. More, for rewards to 40 the gunners – £5 4s. 2d. More, for rewards to 35 lodesmen in the same ships, at 10s. every man – £17 10s. More, for rewards to five surgeons serving in the said five wafters, at 10s. every man – 50s. And more for tonnage of the same 35 ships, estimated at 2,760 tons, at 12d. every ton – £138. [*Summa*] – £461 14s. 2d.

*22 strangers' ships.* Item, more for diets of two captains serving the King in two of the same ships, at 18d. the day – £4 4s. More, for wages of 335 Englishmen, soldiers, mariners and gunners, serving the King in the same 22 ships, at 5s. every man – £83 15s. More, for wages of 379 strangers, mariners and gunners, serving the King in the said 22 ships, at 7s. 1d. every man – £134 4s. 7d. More, for 186 deadshares, at 7s. 1d. every share – £65 17s. 6d. More in rewards to 51 gunners – 43s. 2d. More, for rewards to 22 lodesmen, at 10s. every man – £11. More, for

rewards to two surgeons, at 10s. the man – 20s. And more, for tonnage of the same 22 ships, estimated at 3,465 tons, at 15d. every ton – £216 11s. 3d. *Summa* – £526 [*recte* 516] 15s. 6d.

Sum of ships – 68. Sum of men – [3,152]. Sum of money – £1,456 6s. [*recte* 1s.] 8d.

[*Signed*] John Lisle.

### 15. *Hertford, Lisle and Sadler to the King*

Tynemouth

26 April 1544

[*After other matter*] And now we be here at Tynemouth ready to set foot into the ships, and your Majesty's whole army is on shipboard, so that we abide only for the wind, which at this present is very contrarious; intending with the first that bloweth to serve us to depart to the seas for the execution of the charge committed to me the said Earl, which [*we deleted*] with the grace of God shall be accomplished to your Majesty's honour, whereunto the noblemen, gentlemen and others that be here of your Highness's army of all sorts and degrees be as forward and willing men as ever we saw. And yet we lack at this present three of your Majesty's best ships, the *Pauncy*, the *Great Galley* and the *Swallow*, which because they be great ships, were left without this haven in the seas, according to your Majesty's commandment signified [*by deleted*] to me the said Earl by the Lords of your Council. And the winds arising very high at the North, whereby rose here a great storm, we think the said ships are driven into Humber. Nevertheless we intend not to tarry for them, being in good hope that they will be with us by that time we shall need them, for the wind that shall serve us to go hence shall bring them after us.

[*After reporting Tunstall would remain at Newcastle.*] And thus Almighty God preserve your Majesty in your royal estate most feliciously to endure. At Tynemouth the 26th of April.

Your Majesty's humble subjects and most bounden servants, E. Hertford, John Lisle, Ralph Sadler.

16. *Hertford's fleet and battle orders*

Shields

28 April 1544

Wafers appointed for the vanward.

The *Pauncy*, the *Minion*, the *Swallow*, the *Sabian*<sup>1</sup> of Ipswich, the *John Evangeliste*, the *Galley Subtle*, Harwodde's *Barke of Callayes* to attend upon the *Pauncy*.

Wafers appointed for the [middleward *deleted*] battle.

The *Sweepstake*, the *Swanne of Hambrughe*, the *Mary Grace*, the *Elizabethhe* of Lynn, Cumberforde's ship.

Wafers appointed for the rearward.

The *Great Galley*, the *Julyan* of Dartmouth, the *Peter* of Fowey, the *Anthony Fullford*, the *Bark Riveley*.

Orders taken at Shields within Tynemouth haven the 28th day of April in the 36th year of the reign of our sovereign lord King Henry the eight, by the Earl of Hertford, Great Chamberlain of England, His Highness's Lieutenant in the North Parts and Captain General of his Majesty's army by sea and land at this present against the Scots.

1. First, his Lordship in the King's Majesty's name straitly chargeth and commandeth that all captains, with their soldiers and mariners, shall be in readiness on shipboard in such ships as they be appointed unto by the said Lord Lieutenant, according to such proclamations as have been made in his Lordship's name for that purpose, to the intent that every such ship may weigh anchor with the first propitious wind that God shall send to depart.

2. Item, the Lord Admiral, with certain wafers with him, shall be foremost of the fleet, bearing in his foretopmast a flag of St George's cross, and in the night two lights of a good height in his ship. And all those ships whose captains with their soldiers be appointed to the vanward (whereof the said Lord Admiral is chieftain) shall as near as they can follow the said Lord Admiral. And at such time as the same Lord Admiral shall come to an anchor, all the ships of the vanward shall likewise come to an anchor as near unto his ship as they may conveniently.

3. Item, the said Lord Lieutenant hath appointed his own ship, and the ship which the King's treasure is in, to make sail next unto the fleet of the vanward, and all such ships [with their *deleted*] whose captains with their soldiers are appointed to be about his person in the battle shall follow his Lordship as near as they can, and shall come to an anchor as near as they can about him. And his Lordship hath ordained to bear upon his

<sup>1</sup>Misread in *Hamilton Papers* as '*Gabian*'.

maintopmast a flag of St George's cross and every night two lights on high in his shrouds, and one above his maintop, to the intent every man may know his Lordship's ship from all other, as well by night as by day.

4. Item, next unto the said fleet of the battle, the Earl of Shrewsbury (whom the said Lord Lieutenant hath appointed to be chieftain of the rearward) shall make sail, bearing upon his maintopmast one flag of St George's cross, and every night in the poop of his ship one cresset burning, to the intent all the fleet appointed to the rearward may know the said Earl of Shrewsbury's ship from all others.

5. Item, when the said Lord Lieutenant would have the Lord Admiral to come on board his ship, his Lordship hath appointed to put out a flag above his forecastle. And when his Lordship would have the captain of the rearward to come on board his ship, his pleasure is to set out a flag upon the poop of his ship. And when his Lordship would have all the captains of the middle ward to come on board his ship, he hath appointed to set out a banner of council against the midst of his mainmast, And for because that every captain of the vanward shall have the better knowledge of the tokens afore rehearsed, his Lordship straitly chargeth and commandeth that no ship shall spread any flag in any place above the hatches, not bear any lights in the night above the decks, other than the said Lord Lieutenant's own ship, the Lord Admiral's ship, and the captain of the rearward his ship, as aforesaid.

[*inserted*: 6. Item, if any ship or crayer chance by tempest of weather or other cause to be put from the fleet, the same ships or crayers shall resort to the Firth, as they will answer for the contrary at their perils.]

[6 *deleted*] 7. Item, that every captain, as well of the vanward, rearward<sup>1</sup> and battle, shall cause their boats to be in readiness for the landing of their men when they shall be commanded by the said Lord Lieutenant or the said chieftains. And that every captain whose ship hath any bases or double 'verseis' shall cause a trestle to be made in the forepart of his boat with two halyards to carry two bases or 'verseis' for the more annoyance of their enemies at landing.

[*Military appointments and regulations follow.*]

<sup>1</sup>Word deleted then repeated in margin to stand clear of the inserted matter above.

17. *Hertford, Lisle and Sadler to the King*

Shields, aboard the *Rose Lion*  
30 April 1544

[*After other matter*] Also whereas of late we advertised your Majesty of the want of three of your great ships, the *Pauncy*, the *Great Galley* and the *Swallow*, which we had thought [*inserted through*] the storm here and for lack of victuals had been driven into Humber, I the Lord Admiral have now received certain advertisement by a small crayer purposely sent out of this haven to the said ships with victuals, whereof they were clearly disfurnished, that they lie aloof in the seas, with two other men-of-war of this your Majesty's fleet; of the which five sail I left the charge to William Woodhouse, who notwithstanding the storms here hath kept the seas ever since my departing from him, wherein we think he hath done honest service; and still they keep together afore this coast, in a good readiness to repair to the fleet and to sail forth with the same when God shall send us wind to get out of this haven which yet is very contrarious.

[*Omitted matter*] Finally, we had thought to have dispatched these yesterday, but trusting the wind would have served to blow us out of the river, we stayed the same dispatch, being in hope that we should this day have sent your Majesty good news of our departing. Thus Almighty God preserve your Majesty in your royal estate most feliciously to endure. At Shields withinboard your Highness's ship called the *Rose Lion*, the last of April.

Your Majesty's humble subjects and most bounden servants, E. Hertford, John Lisle, Ralph Sadler.

18. *Postscript by Hertford to letter from himself, Lisle and Sadler to the King*

Shields, aboard the *Rose Lion*  
1 May 1544

Your Majesty shall understand [I]<sup>1</sup> have all this day deferred the dispatch of this post to the intent to give your Majesty knowledge that your army were out of this unhappy haven. This day at 10 of the clock before noon was a full sea, and by reason of the number of ships, the straitness of the haven, with the wind that failed in our most need, constrained all sails to cast anchor and stay here, of which the *Minion*, the *Sweepstake*, the hulks

<sup>1</sup>Ellipse resulting from turn of the page.

and most part of the great ships were forced to tarry; and yet<sup>1</sup> I assure your Highness there lacked no diligence in my Lord Admiral and others to serve you. This night after 10 of the clock was full sea and little wind; nevertheless with labour I trust all shall out at this tide. So that I [thank God *deleted*] trust, with God's leave, the next time your Majesty shall hear of us shall be out [*out of*] Scotland, for the which I assure your Majesty there shall lack no good will nor diligence. Written a mile within the sea.

19. *Hertford, Lisle and Sadler to the King*

Ashore, 2 miles east of Leith  
4 May 1544

Pleaseth your Highness to understand that, according to my former letters, we departed all together from Tynemouth and arrived here before Inchkeith the Saturday following in the afternoon. And this [*da<y> deleted*] Sunday we are landed two miles from Leith, within half a mile of Newhaven, and as it seeth<sup>2</sup> no appearance of any great resists, trusting with God's leave to proceed as shortly as we<sup>3</sup> can to the execution of that your Highness hath committed unto me, the Earl of Hertford. I have also dispatched unto my Lord Eure for his coming hither. Thus beseeching Almighty God to preserve your Majesty with as much felicity as ever had king. Written upon the ground beside the shore this Sunday the [*3 deleted*] 4th of May.

Your Majesty's most humble and bounden subjects and servants, E. Hertford, John Lisle, Ralph Sadler.

20. *Hertford, Lisle and Sadler to the King*

Leith  
6 May 1544

Please it your Highness to understand that upon the dispatch of our last letters unto your Majesty [*4 May*], making mention of our landing besides Leith, having forthwith put your Majesty's army in order of battle, we marched towards Leith in three wards, whereof the I Lord Admiral<sup>4</sup> had

<sup>1</sup>MS. 'it'; 'yet' is clearly intended, and may actually be represented by the MS form.

<sup>2</sup>MS. 'seith'. *Hamilton Papers* editor interpreted this as 'seemeth'.

<sup>3</sup>Word deleted in error.

<sup>4</sup>*CSP Span.* editor here and elsewhere wrongly supposed the Lord Admiral was still Russell.

the forward and the Earl of Shrewsbury the rearward, and so marching towards Leith, intending to recover the town, because, being masters thereof, we might bring into the haven such hoys and crayers as were laden with our great pieces of artillery and the draught horses with their draughts and carriages for the better landing of the same, with such victuals as should be needful for your army, having indeed none other place to land them upon this shore. [*Then an account of the military action which followed, and the occupation of Leith.*]

The said town of Leith we found to be of good substance and riches, at the least of ten thousand pounds, as we suppose, whereof there was great store of grain of all kinds; finding also within the haven two fair ships of the late Scotch King's called the *Salamander* and the *Unicorn*, for the which I, the Lord Admiral, have taken such order that by the sufferance of God the same shall arrive to your Majesty with the rest of your navy. [*There follow reports of a parley with a herald sent by the Provost and Burgesses of Edinburgh, and a conference with a Scottish laird.*]

Finally, since our arrival here, Richard Brooke, captain of the *Galley Subtle*, hath taken a blockhouse situate in an island within this river called Incheogarvie, which after a little assault made thereunto and some shot out of his galley, was rendered unto him; and because your Majesty hath determined that we shall not abide here upon fortification of this town, order is taken that the said blockhouse shall be forthwith razed, which if your Highness's first determination to fortify here had continued, had been worth the keeping. Thus Almighty God preserve your Majesty in your royal estate most feliciously to endure. At Leith on Tuesday the 6th of May, at night.

Your Majesty's most humble subjects and bounden servants, E. Hertford, John Lisle, Ralph Sadler.

## 21. *Lisle to Paget*

Leith  
8 May 1544

Mr Secretary, I have no news to write you but of the stout cardinal, who, like a valiant captain, showed himself on the field with such power as he could make against the King's Majesty's army, setting a great face, as though he would have bidden the battle and had chosen himself a strong ground, having between us and him a river which had a narrow passage. He had bestowed his two slings and three serpentines of iron, and did back the same himself with all his band, which was estimated among

themselves to the number of 5,000 or 6,000 fighting men, besides the multitude of rascals and peasants wherewith the country was furnished; and when he saw the vanguard march down towards him, and that he might perceive they had [no] great devotion to wait the shows<sup>1</sup> to come, his Holiness, like a valiant champion, gave his horse the spurs and turned his back, and was fain to leave his ordnance behind. Yet he tarried till we came within short distance of our hakes.<sup>2</sup> He was apparelled, as it has been reported since to my Lord Lieutenant and me, in a frock of yellow velvet, cut and pulled out with white tinselled sarsenet.

And in the meantime, that we were in no other mind but that we should have some business with him, there was at another passage at the town of Leith certain pieces of ordnance which did us some displeasure; but after we were dispatched of that place, the vanguard marched through to the other passage, the which of force the army must pass before they would come to the town of Leith, and before we could come to that passage they slew two or three of our men, and in conclusion the Scots were fain to leave their ordnance. At such place I stayed the whole vanguard till the battle was come in.

If I should write to you the good order of array that our men kept that day, and being the first day of our marching and newly come from the sea, perchance you would hardly believe it; but I assure you it was passing good.

Thus I take my leave of you for the time, requiring you to show the King's Majesty that I have rigged and equipped for his Highness the *Salamander* and the *Unicorn*, which be two princely ships for their burthen as ever I saw. This last I esteem to be as much as the *Minion*, and the *Salamander* I judge to be as much as the *Great Galley* or within very little, and fully as long. I have loaded their bellies full of great cannon shots of iron.

The soldiers and mariners have made their hands [full] here. I esteem the pillage of the town no less than £10,000 among them. The town standing to be very strong, and no hill nigh unto it to hurt it, I do not perceive but if it were his Majesty's pleasure all the county would be glad to be his Majesty's subjects, and stands in no less fear at the present moment than I think will happen unto them.

You may perceive by this dispatch to the King's Majesty [*as originally enclosed with this to Paget; perhaps the following*] the rest of our proceedings, and what we are determined to do. Thus, after my hearty

<sup>1</sup>CSP Span. editor supposed MS 'showes' to be showers (of arrows), but it is simply 'show' in the sense of military display or threat (OED, 'show', sb<sup>1</sup> 1.c.).

<sup>2</sup>CSP Span. editor suggested 'hackbuts', but 'hake' is commonly used for a distinct smaller form of hand gun.

commendations to yourself, I pray you commend me to my Lord Wriothsesley, and to all my lords and friends, at your discretion. Scribbled at Leith the 8th of May.

22. *Hertford, Lisle and Sadler to the King*

Leith  
15 May 1544

Pleaseth it your Highness to understand that, since the dispatch of our last letters to your Majesty, we have remained here in our camp, and daily sent forth both horsemen and footmen as well by sea as by land, which have devastated the country hereabouts and within six miles of Stirling in such sort as there shall not only remain a perpetual memory of our being here, but also we trust I the Earl of Hertford have so accomplished the charge committed to me by your Highness in that behalf as the enemies shall neither be able to recover this damage whiles we live, ne yet to assemble any power this year in these parts of the realm, whatsoever aid be sent unto them out of France or Denmark to annoy your Majesty's subjects, or to make any invasion into your realm of England during your Majesty's absence out of the same. And now that the country is so devastated, and that we have shipped such great pieces of ordnance as could not be carried with us by land, and furnished your ships with such number of men as shall be sufficient to convey them to Holy Island and Skate Road, and also taken such victuals on land as shall serve for the furniture of your Majesty's army in our return home by land, sending the rest by sea to relieve your Highness's army when the same shall arrive at Berwick – which hath been a busy piece of work, and taken more time than we supposed it would have done, although we have used as much diligence therein as we could for our lives – we do intend tomorrow to burn this town of Leith, and so to march homewards by land, and to do all the annoyance we can to the enemies both in the devastation and spoil of the country in the way of our return, and otherwise as we may conveniently arrect [*set straight*] according to your Majesty's commission and instructions given to me the said Earl in that part; which I shall not fail to observe in all points, to the uttermost of my power. In which journey I have taken with me the Lord Admiral, having the forward of your Majesty's army, who having taken order for the conveyance of your ships to Skate Road and Holy Island as is aforesaid, in the order and charge of William Woodhouse, intendeth upon our arrival in England to repair unto the same, and with as much speed as the wind will serve, to draw to the

Narrow Seas,<sup>1</sup> to be there in a readiness to do further as it shall please your Majesty to appoint. [*Arrangements with Scots collaborators are then reported.*]

Finally, I the Lord Admiral have appointed certain ships of your Majesty's navy here now, in their return, to sail alongst the coast towards St Andrews, and as they pass with the *Galley Subtle* and their boats, to set some good number of men a-land to burn such towns and villages on the coast as they may conveniently. And if the said French ships shall be found there, we trust your Majesty shall hear some good news of the same. This Almighty God preserve your Highness in your royal estate most feliciously to endure. At Leith the 15th of May. [*Postscript omitted.*]

Your Majesty's humble subjects and most bounden servants, E. Hertford, John Lisle, Ralph Sadler.

### 23. *The Privy Council to Hertford and Lisle*

Westminster  
15 May 1544

After our right hearty commendations unto your good Lordship. The King's Majesty hath received your several letters, and by the same doth well perceive your good proceedings, as well for your landing, [*as deleted*] with the repulse of the Earl of Arran and Cardinal, with their bands, and taking the town of Leith, and passages, as the burning of the town of Edinburgh and certain other towns and villages adjoining, which your proceedings, and wise, manly and discreet handling of the charge committed unto you, his Highness taketh in very good and thankful part, as well towards your Lordship as towards you, my Lord Admiral, and others the lords and gentlemen there, and hath willed us to give unto you his Majesty's most hearty thanks for the same, which his Highness will have in his good remembrance, to be considered as occasion shall serve accordingly. [*Military directions follow.*]

Further, your Lordship shall understand that the King's Majesty's pleasure is that, after you shall be returned with the army, you do appoint the number of 2,900 good able soldiers, such as your Lordship shall think most meet, to be chosen of the most inland men, [*and 1,000 also to be appointed by you, and you my Lord Admiral, of such as were carried from hence by sea inserted*], and cause the same, with such captains as you shall think most meet, to be embarked at Newcastle [*or such other place as you think fit inserted*], and from thence to pass by the seas to Calais,

<sup>1</sup>Misread in *Hamilton Papers* as 'to the warr ovre sees'.

whom his Majesty intendeth to use in his Grace's wars against France, in the choosing and picking out of which number [of 3,900 *inserted*] his Highness's pleasure is that you have special regard to leave the frontiers and other places adjoining to the same as well furnished with men for defence thereof as may be.

*Postscript.* The King's Majesty's pleasure is that you my Lord Admiral shall take order that all such men [as well the inland men as such as you carried from hence by sea, the whole amounting to 3,900, as before is said *inserted*] as shall be there appointed to attend upon his Majesty into France, be safely wafted from such place where they shall be embarked, there [*sic*] to Calais; giving them notice that, taking with them their tents, hales and other baggages necessary, they shall find at their arrival to Calais carriages prepared for them for conveyance of the same accordingly. And also that, appointing such ships as your Lordship shall think most meet for keeping the Narrow Seas, you do also assign so many men to remain with the same for that purpose as, with them being already upon the same seas for that purpose, may make up the full number in all of 2,000 men; and that, order being taken by your Lordship as well for these purposes as for the saving of such victuals as shall remain, you do then dismiss other ships being not by you appointed for any the purposes aforesaid. And thus we bid your Lordships most heartily well to fare. From Westminster, the 15th day of May 1544.

Your Lordships' assured loving friends, Thomas Wriothesley, Chancellor, T. Norfolk, Charles Suffolk, Stephen Winton:, W. St John, John Gage, Anthony Browne.

[*Endorsed:*] Received at Berwick 18 May.

## 24. *Hertford, Lisle and Sadler to the King*

Berwick  
18 May 1544

[*After reporting the burning of Edinburgh and many other places.*] And so this journey is accomplished to your Majesty's honour in such sort as we trust your Majesty shall hear that the like devastation hath not been made in Scotland these many years, as I the Lord Admiral shall at more length declare the circumstances of the same to your Highness; intending forthwith to repair unto your Majesty's presence in post, to know your gracious pleasure for the better ordering of your Majesty's affairs by sea. And before my departure hence I shall take order for the sure conveyance of your Majesty's ships being now arrived here out of the Firth to the Narrow Seas with as much speed as the wind will serve.

[*Diplomatic reports follow.*]

At Berwick, the 18th of May at 11 a'clock within night. Your Majesty's humble subjects and most bounden servants, E. Hertford, John Lisle, Ralph Sadler.

## 25. *Hertford to the King*

Berwick

19 May 1544

Pleaseth it your Highness to be advertised that, for as much as my Lord Admiral repaireth unto your Majesty, I can do no less than to recommend him unto your Highness as one that hath served you hardily, wisely, diligently, painfully, and as obediently as any that I have seen; most humbly beseeching your Majesty that he may perceive by your Highness that I have not forgotten his good service.

[*With commendation of others.*]

From your Highness's town of Berwick the 19th of May.

Your Majesty's humble subject and most bounden servant. E. Hertford.

## 26. *Estimate for the naval charges of the whole expedition*

London

8 June 1544

*Anno regni regis Henrici xxxvi xxxvj.* An estimate made in London the 8th day of June for wages of the army late sent out of the Thames (and now returned from Scotland), having served by the space of 53 days, that is 7 weeks and 4 days begun the 18 day April last, to end Monday the 9th day of this present.

*English ships* – 48. In primis for the diets of the Lord Clinton, Sir Nicholas Poyntz, Sir George Blount, Sir William Woodhouse, Sir Rhys Mansell, Sir Charles Howard, Sir John Jennens, Sir John Luttrell, Thomas Wyndham, William Tyrrell, Baldwin Willoughby, Andrew Flamock, Richard Brooke and William Brooke, captains, at 79s. 6d. every man – £55 13s. Item more for wages of 2,175 soldiers, mariners and gunners for like time, at 9s. 5d. every man – £1,024 1s. 3d. Item more in 473 deadshares to be divided amongst them at 9s. 5d. every share – £222 14s 1d. Item more in rewards to 159 gunners for like time – £34. Item more for rewards to 48 lodesmen for like time, at 18s. 10d. every man – £45 4s. Item more in rewards to 11 surgeons for like time, at 18s. 10d. every man – £10 7s. 2d.

Item more in tonnage for like time of 37 English ships, estimated at 2,960 tons at 22½d. every ton – £277 10s. *Summa* – £1,669 9s. 8d.

*Strangers' ships* – 10. Item more for wages of 230 Englishmen and 110 strangers serving in the said ships by the space of two months begun as before, and to end the 12th day of this present, with their deadshares, rewards to gunners, lodesmen, surgeons and tonnage – £408 15s. 8d.

*Summa totalis* – £2,086 4s. 4d.

And so the 11 strangers' ships discharged in the north parts be not put into this estimate, and out of the same there must be abated £67 18s. delivered in prest to the Lord William and Sir Rhys Mansell; which done, at the King's pleasure to be disbursed for the premises to the paymaster John Wynter in prest – £2,018 6s. 4d.

Memorandum, for the conduct of divers of the mariners and soldiers aforesaid, being diseased with sundry diseases, to their dwelling places, by estimation – [blank].

## List of Documents

(*MSS, previous printed versions and calendar references*)

- 1 PRO, SP 1/179, fol. 27r–v (*State Papers*, I, pp. 756–7; *LP*, XVIII, i, 701)
- 2 PRO, SP 1/179, fol. 33–33v (*LP*, XVIII, ii, 711)
- 3 PRO, SP 1/179, fol. 35 (*LP*, XVIII, ii, 712) [*all of extant fragment*]
- 4 PRO, SP1/179, fol. 64 (*LP*, XVIII, i, 740)
- 5 PRO, SP 1/180, fol. 46r–v (*LP*, XVIII, i, 849)
- 6 PRO, SP 1/180, fol. 57r–v (*LP*, XVIII, i, 867)
- 7 PRO, SP 1/181, fol. 5 (*LP*, XVIII, ii, 8) [*original instrument*]
- 8 PRO, SP 1/182, fols 73–4 (*LP*, XVIII, ii, 348)
- 9 Hatfield House, Cecil Papers 231/74 (Haynes, *State Papers*, pp. 15–16; HMC, *Salisbury MSS*, I, p. 117; *LP*, XIX, i, 230)
- 10 Hatfield House, Cecil Papers 231/97 (Haynes, *State Papers*, pp. 20–1; HMC, *Salisbury MSS*, I, p. 121; *LP*, XIX, i, 238)
- 11 BL, Add. MS 32654, fol. 64r–v (*Hamilton Papers*, II, pp. 316–18 [no. 199]; *LP*, XIX, i, 264)
- 12 BL, Add. MS 32654, fols 70–71v (*Hamilton Papers*, II, pp. 321–2 [no. 202]; *LP*, XIX, i, 366) [*conclusion*]
- 13 BL, Add. MS 32654, fols 141–2 (*Hamilton Papers*, II, pp. 354–7 [no. 220]; *LP*, XIX, i, 366) [*extracts*]
- 14 PRO, SP 1/187, fol. 30 (*LP*, XIX, i, 396)
- 15 BL, Add. MS 32654, fol. 157r–v (*Hamilton Papers*, II, pp. 351–3 [no. 225]; *LP*, XIX, i, 406) [*extracts*]

- 16 BL, Add. MS 32654, fols 160–161v (*Hamilton Papers*, II, pp. 354–6 [no. 227]; *LP*, XIX, i, 416(i)) [*first part*]
- 17 BL, Add. MS 32654, fols 164–5 (*Hamilton Papers*, II, pp. 357–8 [no. 228]; *LP*, XIX, i, 432) [*extracts*]
- 18 BL, Add. MS 32654, fol. 166r–v (*Hamilton Papers*, II, pp. 358–9 [no. 229]; *LP*, XIX, i, 451) [*conclusion*]
- 19 BL, Add. MS 32654, fol. 168 (*Hamilton Papers*, II, p. 360 [no. 230]; *LP*, XIX, i, 463)
- 20 BL, Add. MS 32654, fols 173–7 (*Hamilton Papers*, II, pp. 361–6 [no. 232]; *LP*, XIX, i, 472; also *CSP Span.* VII, no. 85 [pp. 135–41], from HHSA)
- 21 *CSP Span.* VII, no. 86 (pp. 141–2), from HHSA (*LP*, XIX, i, 481)
- 22 BL, Add. MS 32654, fols 189–92 (*Hamilton Papers*, II, pp. 371–5 [no. 237]; *LP*, XIX, i, 510) [*extracts*]
- 23 Hatfield House, Cecil Papers 231/98 (HMC, *Salisbury MSS*, i, 159; Haynes, *State Papers*, pp. 33–5; *LP*, XIX, i, 508) [*extracts*]
- 24 BL, Add. MS 32654, fols 198–200v (*Hamilton Papers*, II, pp. 379–82 [no. 240]; *LP*, XIX, i, 531) [*extracts*]
- 25 BL, Add. MS 32654, fol. 204 (*State Papers*, V, p. 390; *Hamilton Papers*, II, p. 384 [no. 241]; *LP*, XIX, ii, 535)
- 26 PRO, SP 49/7, no. 15 (*LP*, XIX, i, 643)

### III

## THE JOURNAL OF THE VOYAGE OF THE *MARIGOLD* TO ICELAND, 1654

*Edited by*  
*Evan T. Jones*

On 21 April 1654 the day that Oliver Cromwell signed the articles of peace ending the First Dutch War, the Commonwealth Navy ship *Marigold* was ordered to convoy the English fishing fleet to Iceland. The *Marigold's* captain, Humphrey Felstead, was further instructed to keep a journal of his voyage and send it to the Admiralty Commission on his return. This was duly done, so that his journal now survives among the State Papers of the Commonwealth.<sup>1</sup> The journal is significant both for being an early survival of its type and for being one of the best contemporary sources available on the activities of the English in Iceland during the early modern period.

Both the decision of the Admiralty to send a convoy to Iceland and the timing of its decision can be explained. While few today are even aware that the English fished off Iceland at this time, it was regarded by contemporaries as one of England's most important fisheries.<sup>2</sup> Indeed, in the 1630s the cod and ling fisheries off Iceland had been described as the 'greatest fishing of the kingdom' which, 'exceedeth the Newfoundland & herring fishing'.<sup>3</sup> And while this might have been a slight exaggeration, it was not much of one; for the Iceland fishing fleet, which came mostly from Norfolk and Suffolk, could contain as many as 160 ships of between 50 and 150 tons burden.<sup>4</sup> The early seventeenth century proved, however, to be the high-water mark of this industry. The Iceland venture was hit hard by the maritime lawlessness of the Civil War and interregnum, so that when the *Marigold* began her convoy on 16 May 1654, she was

<sup>1</sup>TNA, S.P. 18/75, 44. For his assistance in identifying the place names in Iceland, I would like to thank Svavar Sigmundsson of The Place Names Institute of Iceland. For identification of some of the more obscure naval terms found in the journal, I thank Alan H. Hartley, Duluth, Minnesota.

<sup>2</sup>For a more detailed discussion, see: E. Jones, 'England's Icelandic fishery in the early modern period' in D. J. Starkey (ed.), *England's Sea Fisheries: The Commercial Sea Fisheries of England and Wales Since 1300* (London, 2000).

<sup>3</sup>TNA, S.P. 16/229, no. 80.

<sup>4</sup>*Calendar of State Papers Domestic, Charles I, 1627–28*, p. 512; TNA, S.P. 16/229, 80.

accompanied by just 19 vessels. The Admiralty Commission might therefore have felt, with some justification, that if the remnants of the fishing fleet was not protected, an industry would be extinguished that had played a vital role in training men to sea. Moreover, if those in London ever forgot about the fishery, they were regularly reminded of its significance by Major William Burton of Great Yarmouth, who, besides being an alderman of the town on which the Iceland fishery was centred, was also an important naval administrator for the Protectorate.<sup>1</sup>

As for the timing of the Admiralty's decision to provide a convoy, it seems likely that this was shaped by the events of the war. Since the Iceland fishing vessels normally departed in March or April, the decision to dispatch a convoy vessel came late in the year. It seems likely that a ship had not been sent earlier because the Admiralty had been reluctant to commit a ship before it could be sure that the Dutch war was really over. Nevertheless, following the signing of the Treaty of Westminster on 5 April, this would have been all but certain. Meanwhile, the need to send a convoy was emphasised by reports that some English fishing vessels, having despaired of protection that year, had been taken by pirates while on route to Iceland.<sup>2</sup> With other ships sheltering in Berwick, or remaining locked up in their East Anglian ports, it was clear that a convoy had to be provided if the voyage was to proceed that year.

The *Marigold* and her captain were certainly suited to the task. Listed in 1653 as a vessel of 100 men and 30 guns, the *Marigold* under Captain Felstead had spent most of 1652 and the early part of 1653 protecting merchantmen and supply ships in the seas around Ireland and western Scotland. In June 1653 she convoyed some vessels from Galway to the Downs and was subsequently appointed to the fleet blockading the Dutch coast under Vice-Admiral Lawson.<sup>3</sup> She then appears to have spent the winter in Deptford, where the journal begins. On 18 February 1654 the *Marigold* was dispatched to Portsmouth where, on 21 April, she was ordered to Yarmouth to convoy the Iceland fishing fleet.

The journal of the *Marigold* reveals much about the Iceland fishery that is not known from other sources. It provides details of the route the fishermen took, the places they chose to fish, the place names they allocated to the coastline of Iceland and the hazards they encountered

<sup>1</sup>G. E. Aylmer, 'Burton, William (c.1608–1673), merchant and naval administrator', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford, 2004); C. T. Atkinson (ed.), *Letters and Papers relating to the First Dutch War, 1652–1654*, Vol. VI (Navy Records Society, LXVI, 1930), p. 255; *Cal. S.P. Domestic, Commonwealth*, 1656–57, p. 381; 1659–60, p. 390.

<sup>2</sup>*Cal. S.P. Domestic, Commonwealth*, 1654, p. 111.

<sup>3</sup>Atkinson (ed.), *First Dutch War*, Vol. V, p. 415; Vol. VI, p. 52; *Cal. S.P. Domestic, Commonwealth*, 1651–52, p. 257; 1652–53, pp. 26, 433, 536.

along the way. It also reveals some interesting snippets about the attitudes of the Icelanders to the English and of the English to the Icelanders.

In terms of the route taken, the most surprising aspect of the voyage is that, having cleared Caithness, the fleet sailed through the middle of the Orkneys, along a passage that Felstead refers to as 'St Magnus Sound'.<sup>1</sup> This route appears to have been preferred to the more obvious alternatives, namely, sailing west through the Pentland Firth or sailing between Orkney and Shetland. Having passed through the Orkneys, the ship headed north past the Faroes and then northwest to Iceland, where the heights of 'Ingey' (Vatnajökull) were used to make their landfall. The fishermen the *Marigold* had convoyed then headed to the east of the island, while the *Marigold* headed west, to meet up with ships that had departed before her appointment.

It seems that Captain Felstead's original plan was to circumnavigate Iceland before rendezvousing at Orkney to convoy the fleet home. In the event, he only got as far as the Ragg (Hornvík) on Iceland's north-western peninsula. This was because the ice had advanced so far southeast from Greenland that the route around the island was impassable. Indeed, in some of the most vivid passages of the journal, Felstead reveals that the *Marigold* came close to being either trapped or destroyed by the ice on more than one occasion.<sup>2</sup>

Having been forced back from the Ragg, the *Marigold* spent a month cruising off the northwest peninsula, while the fleet fished. Again, were it not for the journal, the importance of these fishing grounds would not be evident, since most of the other sources from this period stress the importance of the fishing grounds to the south of Iceland, particularly around the Vestmann Isles.<sup>3</sup> The journal also reveals that the English visitors seem to have had regular contact with the Icelanders, for although a 1632 account had claimed that the English fishermen conducted all their fishing '6, 8, 10 or 20 leagues off the shore', the fishermen frequently entered the fjords to obtain water, fresh food, fuel and ballast.<sup>4</sup> The people the *Marigold* encountered varied from the impoverished folk living around the Ragg to the sophisticated and well-travelled Paul Johnson, a 'Justice of the Peace' who expressed admiration for England and claimed that,

<sup>1</sup>25–6 May, 9 August.

<sup>2</sup>17–22 June.

<sup>3</sup>E. M. Carus-Wilson, 'The Iceland Trade' in E. Power and M. M. Postan, *Studies in English Trade in the Fifteenth Century* (London, 1933), p. 172; J. Webb, *Great Tooley of Ipswich: Portrait of an Early Tudor Merchant* (Ipswich, 1962), p. 91; *Cal. S.P. Domestic, Charles I*, 1627–28, p. 512; 1631–33, p. 259; 1639–40, pp. 162–3; *Statutes of the Realm*, Vol. V, p. 499.

<sup>4</sup>TNA S.P. 16/229, 80.

had the wars continued, the Icelanders would rather have accepted the overlordship of England than that of Denmark.<sup>1</sup>

By the end of July, all the fishing ships in the northwest had made their voyage, their holds full of salted fish. Heading back south, the *Marigold* once again took, or at least intended to take, a somewhat odd route. This time it was that, having sighted the Mykines at the western end of the Faroes, Felstead headed east so that he could sail through what he called 'St Thomas' Sound',<sup>2</sup> presumably one of the narrow sounds that cut through the main group of the Faroe Isles. Whether this was a regular feature of the route employed by the English fishermen is unclear. Back at the Orkneys the *Marigold* attempted once more to sail from east to west via 'St Magnus Sound' to make her rendezvous with the rest of the fishing fleet.<sup>3</sup> Having learned that all the fishermen were well to the east and did not expect his coming, the *Marigold* proceeded south, returning to Yarmouth on the 19 August, exactly three months after leaving Norfolk.

### Transcription Information

The transcription of the journal departs from NRS conventions in one key respect, in that, while modern spellings are used for the place names of mainland Britain, the place names of Iceland, the Faroes and the Orkneys have not been modernised. This is because the journal uses the fishermen's names, many of which are unique to the English fishermen of this period. To replace these names with their modern Icelandic equivalent, with Captain Felstead referring to Bjargtangar, Tálknafjörður and Fuglasker, rather than the Fair Foreland, Lowsey Bay and the Gannet Islands, would be anachronistic. The original names have therefore been retained, albeit using standardised spelling. Where such names first appear, they are accompanied by footnotes giving the modern place name. Further discussion of the English fishermen's place names in Iceland can be found elsewhere.<sup>4</sup>

### The Electronic Version of the Journal

An electronic version of the journal has been produced to complement the version printed here. This electronic version is a more exact copy of the original manuscript, using the original spellings, punctuation,

<sup>1</sup>8 June, 18 June, 11 July.

<sup>2</sup>5–6 August.

<sup>3</sup>8–9 August.

<sup>4</sup>E. T. Jones, 'Charting the world of English fishermen in early modern Iceland', *Mariner's Mirror*, 90 (2004).

capitalisation, line spacing, pagination and place names. It can be accessed through a permanent URL (internet address) in the electronic repository of the University of Bristol.<sup>1</sup> It is accompanied by slightly fuller notes and a glossary of place names.

## THE JOURNAL

The 18th day of February C53 [1654]<sup>2</sup> we set sail from Deptford in the State's ship<sup>3</sup> the *Marigold* & by my instructions was ordered to sail to Portsmouth & coming thither I received an order from General Blake<sup>4</sup> to sail to Yarmouth and when I came to Yarmouth I received another order from Major Burton<sup>5</sup> to go a convoy for the Iceland fishers & to send a journal of our proceedings to your Honours which I have here done.

The 18th day of February being Saturday we set sail from Deptford having the wind at SW a fair gale<sup>6</sup> & in the afternoon we came to an anchor in Gallions<sup>7</sup> & there we lay till the 11th of March having the wind all that time at SSE and ENE & in part of this time we got in our guns & other stores then waiting for an opportunity to set sail.

### *March the 11th C53 [1654]*

11th day of March being Saturday in the morning we set sail from Gallions & by my instructions to sail into the Hope<sup>8</sup> & there rode the *Andrew*<sup>9</sup> with other of the State's ships that were designed for Portsmouth & I was likewise to sail in company with them to Portsmouth so in the afternoon we came to an anchor near Rainham having the wind at WSW little wind.

12th day being the Lord's Day in the morning we weighed anchor from off Rainham having the wind at WSW a fair gale & about 7 o'clock at night we got down into Tilbury Hope & there we came to an anchor again.

<sup>1</sup>E. T. Jones, 'The Journal of the Marigold, 1654 (e-version)' in Bristol Repository of Scholarly Eprints (ROSE) (Bristol, 2006), <http://hdl.handle.net/1983/597>.

<sup>2</sup>'C53' stands for 1653. The date is based on the tradition of taking 25 March as the start of the year. So, the date would be 18 February 1654 by modern reckoning.

<sup>3</sup>'States ship': a vessel belonging to England's Commonwealth Navy.

<sup>4</sup>Adm. Robert Blake, commander of the Channel fleet during the First Dutch War.

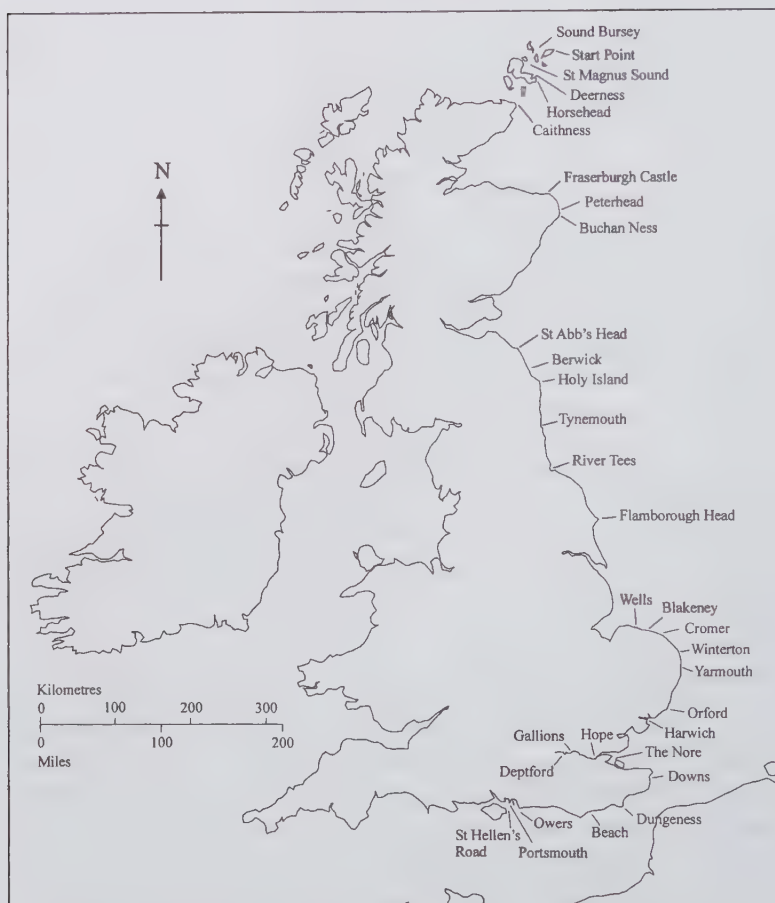
<sup>5</sup>Major William Burton. See n. 1 on p. 98.

<sup>6</sup>A 'fair gale' is a gale favourable to the ship's course.

<sup>7</sup>Anchorage on the River Thames just upriver of Barking.

<sup>8</sup>Tilbury Hope, an anchorage on the River Thames just below Tilbury.

<sup>9</sup>*St Andrew*, 42-gun ship: Colledge, *Ships of the Royal Navy*, Vol. I, p. 480.



I Map of Britain showing the principal places mentioned in the Journal of the *Marigold*

13th day being Monday we set sail again out of Tilbury Hope in company of the *Andrew*, *Bridgewater*, *Marmaduke* & the *Old President*<sup>1</sup> & about 5 o'clock in the afternoon we came to an anchor off the easternmost end of the Nore<sup>2</sup> in 8 fathoms water having the wind at W by S.

<sup>1</sup>*Bridgewater*, 58-gun ship; *Marmaduke* (formerly *Revenge*), 42-gun ship; *President* / *Old President*, 26-gun ship: Colledge, *Ships of the Royal Navy*, Vol. I, pp. 89, 434, 462.

<sup>2</sup>Anchorage where the Medway joins the Thames.

14th day being Tuesday we rode still all that day it being calm & that little wind that was went round the compass sometimes at WSW & so to the NE with wet & thick weather.

15th day being Wednesday we set sail again and got down to the eastward of the Ouse Edge<sup>1</sup> about 2 mile & the buoy did bear SW of us & we rode in 6 fathoms water.

*March ~ 16th – C54<sup>2</sup>*

16th day being Thursday we set sail again having the wind at NE so we turned down till we were within a mile & a ½ of the buoy off the Middle Ground<sup>3</sup> & then we came to an anchor in 8 fathoms water in good ground.

17th day being Friday in the morning we set sail again having the wind at NE a fresh gale<sup>4</sup> & when the tide was spent we came to an anchor near the eastmost end of the Middle Ground in 5 fathoms & a ½ water in very good ground.

18th day being Saturday in the morning we set sail again having the wind at ENE & about 2 o'clock in the afternoon we came to an anchor off the Gunfleet<sup>5</sup> in 7 fathoms water the tide being spent & this day there came a fleet of laden colliers from Newcastle, we pressed some men out of them.

19th day being the Lord's Day about 8 of the clock in the morning we set sail again with the wind at NE & about 4 o'clock in the afternoon we came to an anchor off Harwich in a 11 [*sic*] fathoms water. Good ground, it being calm.

20th day being Monday in the morning we set sail again having the wind at NNW a fresh gale & about 12 o'clock we came to an anchor in the Downs in 9 fathoms & about 5 o'clock we weighed anchor again forth of the Downs and at 8 o'clock at night having but little wind we came to an anchor in Dover Road in 16 fathoms water.

<sup>1</sup>Anchorage in the Thames Estuary, c. 5 miles east of the Nore.

<sup>2</sup>Written in error. Since he was taking 25 March as the start of the year, this should have been 'C53'.

<sup>3</sup>Anchorage in the Thames Estuary c. 2 miles NE of Warden on the Isle of Sheppey.

<sup>4</sup>A brisk or stiff gale.

<sup>5</sup>Anchorage in the Thames Estuary, c. 4 miles SE of Clacton-on-Sea, Essex.

21st day being Tuesday about 5 o'clock in the morning we set sail again having the wind at W and about a 11 of the clock we came to an anchor off Folkestone and about 4 o'clock in the afternoon we set sail again having the wind at WSW a fresh gale & about 10 o'clock at night we came to an anchor off Dungeness in 21 fathoms water & the light house did bear N & by W about 4 mile off having a fresh gale till morning at WSW.

22nd day being Wednesday about 3 o'clock in the morning the wind came up at NW & blew so hard that we could not weigh our anchor till 10 o'clock & then we set sail again having the wind at NNW a fresh gale & about 10 o'clock at night we came to an anchor again between Fairlight & Beach<sup>1</sup> then having the wind at W we anchored in 30 fathoms.

23rd day being Thursday we had so much wind at NW & by W that we could not weigh our anchor but were constrained for to ride fast all that day.

#### *March 24 C53*

24th day being Friday about 6 o'clock in the morning we weighed our anchor again having the wind at NW & by N a fresh gale & at noon we were abreast of Beach & the wind veered to the WSW & blew very fresh. This day we saw 2 Dunkirk men of war & we shot towards them so they lowered there main topsail & stood away & we still turning till 8 o'clock at night & then came to an anchor SW of Beach in 30 fathoms.

#### *March the 25 C1654*

25th day being Saturday about 2 o'clock in the morning we set sail again having the wind at WSW a fresh gale & at 7 o'clock at night we came to an anchor S from Arundel about 2 leagues off in 30 fathoms water.

26th day being the Lord's Day we weighed anchor from off Arundel having the wind at SW a fair gale & in the afternoon we came to an anchor in St Hellen's Road<sup>2</sup> with all that came out of Tilbury Hope. We anchored in 17 fathoms good ground & there rode the fleet the *Swiftsure*<sup>3</sup> being

<sup>1</sup>Anchorage off Bexhill, East Sussex.

<sup>2</sup>Anchorage at the east end of the Isle of Wight.

<sup>3</sup>*Swiftsure*, rebuilt in 1653 as 898 tons burden: Colledge, *Ships of the Royal Navy*, Vol. I, p. 540.

Admiral wherein was General Blake and there we rode till I had further order which was not till the 21st day of April following.

*April the 21st C54*

21st day being Friday this morning I received an order from General Blake he then being aboard of the *Sovereign*<sup>1</sup> & by my order I was to weigh anchor forthwith & to set sail for Yarmouth roads & there to receive instructions from Major Burton to go a convoy for Iceland fishers & about 5 of the clock in the morning we weighed our anchor & set sail out of St Hellen's Road. Vice-Admiral Lawson<sup>2</sup> likewise set sail with his squadron & we had the wind at SW by S a fair gale & about noon we weathered the Owers<sup>3</sup> & about 9 o'clock at night it did lightning & thunder & rain very much till one o'clock in the morning.

22nd day being Saturday in the morning we were abreast of Pevensey about 4 leagues off having the wind at W by N & about 8 o'clock at night the North Foreland did bear NW & by N about 6 leagues off.

23rd day being the Lord's day at 4 o'clock in the morning the North Foreland did bear SW & by S 6 leagues off & at 10 o'clock in the forenoon we saw Bawdsey Cliffs & they did bear NW by N & we had the wind at E by S & we sounded & had 16 fathoms & the course we steered from Orford is NNE & N by E till we brought Yarmouth Church NNW of us & when our ship was moored then Caister Point did bear N & by W of us & Yarmouth Church did bear NW-Nthly & the old church at Gorleston did bear W ½ a point Nly and the Westmost Wood & the pair were both in one & they did bear SW by W of us & Lowestoft Point did bear SE by E of us & we anchored in 7 fathoms & here I was appointed to stay till our convoys were ready which was till the 16th day of May following.

*May the 16th C54*

16th day of May being Tuesday in the morning we set sail out of Yarmouth Roads with our convoys being bound for Iceland having the wind at NE by E & at noon we came to an anchor abreast of the great light house to the southward of Winterton Ness. The tide being done we anchored in 7 fathoms & the wind being at NNE & at 7 o'clock at night we weighed &

<sup>1</sup>*Sovereign*, 100-gun ship: Colledge, *Ships of the Royal Navy*, Vol. I, p. 516.

<sup>2</sup>John Lawson, commander of the North Sea Fleet.

<sup>3</sup>Shoals to the south of Selsey Bill, West Sussex.

set sail again having the wind at NE by N. We turned through the narrow & had sounding 17 foot & there we see Master Paine of Ipswich, his ship that had been cast away. Her name was the *Trial* she was laden & came from Newcastle, she was cast away upon the very point of the ness. She had some of her sails standing but we see nobody in her but many people on the shore taking up of such things as drove from her.

17th day being Wednesday at 9 o'clock in the morning we came to an anchor off Blakeney in 7 fathoms & a ½ water good ground & Blakeney Church did bear S 4 mile off & Wells did bear SW & there we stayed for our convoys as I was designed by my orders but those convoys that came from Yarmouth with us kept on their course only 2 that went with us & as soon as we came to an anchor I sent our boat ashore with letters to the owners of those barks that were bound for Iceland fishery this year desiring them to hasten forth those vessels to God for I was to be their convoy.

18th day being Thursday in the morning we had the wind at E and about 10 o'clock the man that went to Wells to carry letters to the barks and to hasten the barks out he returned aboard again & brought word that they would come forth the next tide, the which they did, but before they came out the wind veered to the E by S then we weighed & stood to sea & we steered away NNE till we were clear of the sands & then we braced up our sails & stayed for our convoys which were 19 in number.

19th day being Friday about 4 o'clock in the morning we met with Vice-Admiral Lawson & his squadron. They came from the northward there was 12 sail of them they were bound to the southward & we spoke with 2 of them viz. the *Kentish* frigate & the *Diamond*.<sup>1</sup> We spoke with them of the 'sporne'<sup>2</sup> & they told us that they had seen 24 Holland ships some of them were bound for Greenland & some of them were men-of-war. This squadron came out of Portsmouth when we came out & had been to the northward till we stayed at Yarmouth staying for our convoys & at 4 o'clock in the afternoon Flamborough Head bore NW of us & we steered away NNW.

20th day being Saturday in the morning we had the wind at E by N, little wind a great fog & we steered away NNW because we durst not seize the land to come to Tynemouth Bar where I was assigned by my instructions

<sup>1</sup>*Kentish*, 46-gun ship; *Diamond*, 50-gun ship: Colledge, *Ships of the Royal Navy*, Vol. I, pp. 163, 299.

<sup>2</sup>Possibly a reference to Spurn Head, Yorkshire.

to call for the rest of our convoys. But 5 that came from Wells with us kept on their courses & would not stay but the rest went into the river to take in salt & at 7 o'clock at night we came to an anchor in Tynemouth Road in 13 fathoms having the wind SE fair weather & the N land did bear of us NNW  $\frac{1}{2}$  Wly & Tynemouth Castle W by N & the light house did bear W by S & the southland SSW of us. We found the *Mary Prize*<sup>1</sup> there but she set sail very early in the morning & according to my orders from Major Burton I sent letters to Berwick & Holy Island to hasten those away that were put in by the enemy<sup>2</sup> for I was to come to them & to be their convoy to Iceland & this day we pressed some men.

*May 21 – C54*

21st day being the Lord's Day we had the wind at E by S a fresh gale & we pressed some men out of light colliers that were bound into Tynemouth Haven.

22nd day being Monday the wind was variable at SE & SSE with gusts & rain & in the morning we saw the *Gainsborough* sail by to the northward & in the afternoon the *Weymouth* pink<sup>3</sup> came in to Tynemouth Road. This day we fetched a boat's loading of water & our convoys sent on word that they would come out in the morning if that the wind stood. Now there was 5 sail of Southwold men there & I sent our pilot to them to desire them to hasten out with the rest of our convoys but they slight the pilot & told him he might go, for the way was open for they had driven no stakes in the way to hinder him. Moreover it was reported that they had no money to buy salt & as it seemed their bills would not be accepted.<sup>4</sup> So I, having received their answer, fitted to sail with those that were willing & ready to go.

23rd day being Tuesday about 8 o'clock in the morning we with our convoys weighed anchor from out of Tynemouth Road having the wind at SE by S much wind hazy & rain and at noon the Staples did bear W of us and about 4 o'clock in the afternoon St Abb's Head by judgement did bear west of us some 8 leagues off very thick & hazy weather.

<sup>1</sup>*Mary Prize*, 36-gun ship: Colledge, *Ships of the Royal Navy*, Vol. I, p. 349.

<sup>2</sup>For details, see: *Cal. S.P. Domestic, Commonwealth*, 1654, p. 111.

<sup>3</sup>*Gainsborough*, 40-gun ship; *Weymouth*, 14-gun ship: Colledge, *Ships of the Royal Navy*, Vol. I, pp. 226, 609.

<sup>4</sup>Since the fish were preserved in salt, with two pints being required for each fish, it was a vital commodity to those engaged in the Iceland fishery: John Collins, *Salt and Fishery* (London, 1682), 88.

24th day being Wednesday we were about 4 leagues off Buchan Ness & it did bear S of us the wind being variable from the SE to SW with much wind & after we were abreast of Buchan Ness we steered away NW by N till 10 o'clock in the morning then Fraserburgh Castle did bear WNW about 8 mile off and the N point of the 'Frith'<sup>1</sup> did bear W by S about 3 leagues off. The *Robert* of Wells, whereof Edmond Wean is master, his bark could not sail so well as the rest of our convoys, so we took his cable & towed him & the course we made good this 24 hours is N ½ a point Wly 57 leagues.

### *Isles of Orkneys*

25th day being Thursday at 4 o'clock in the morning Caithness<sup>2</sup> did bear W by N 4 leagues off us & we stood to the westwards till we brought a high sugarloaf hill that is one of the Highlands SW by S ½ Wly of us & there is another little hill to the westward of it & then we steered to the westward of it also & being to the westward of it we steered away NE to the Horsehead<sup>3</sup> which is distant about 9 leagues & the Horsehead is a little Island & makes like a wedge & there is foul ground betwixt that & the great island & there is another little Island to the eastward of the Horsehead & thereon standeth a house on the southermost end of it about 4 mile from the Horsehead going into Durst Sound or Deerness.<sup>4</sup> And at noon we had Durst Sound open & the course we made good this 24 hours is NNW–½Wly 24 leagues having the wind variable from the SW to the S by W fair weather. This Durst Sound is a good harbour for all winds and we steered away N by W & NNW about 3 leagues till we brought a Castle that is on the E side to the NE of us and it is hard by the water side and from thence it lieth NW through & the next point to the Horsehead is a steep point or cliff not unlike the North Foreland and it is called Dearness & when you steer away NW you shall see a church bear NW of you called St Magnus Church.<sup>5</sup> Steer over with it because of the tide but it lieth NNW through & there is a sluice of a tide both ebb & flood & about 7 o'clock at night we were clear of St Magnus Sound<sup>6</sup> having the wind at SW a fair gale.

<sup>1</sup>Possibly Cairnbulg Point, east of Fraserburgh Castle.

<sup>2</sup>This refers to the northeastern cape of Caithness, Duncansby Head.

<sup>3</sup>Horse of Copinsay, a small island and navigation landmark to the east of Orkney.

<sup>4</sup>Deerness is the easternmost peninsula of Orkney. As in the case of Caithness, the entry suggests that Deerness is being taken as the name for the northern cape of Deerness, known today as Mull Head. Durst Sound is Deer Sound, the bay to the west of Deerness.

<sup>5</sup>St Magnus Church, Egilsay. Until the 19th century this medieval church possessed a 20-metre high round tower, which would have made it a good navigation landmark.

<sup>6</sup>'St Magnus Sound': the 9 August entry suggests the name applied to the whole east–west route through the Orkneys, encompassing Stronsay Firth and Westray Firth.

*May 26th C54*

26th day being Friday at noon we were by judgement about 21 leagues off Orkneys & the course we made good this 24 hours is 21 leagues having the wind variable from the SW to the ENE a fresh gale and about 4 o'clock in the afternoon we took in our foresail & lay a try<sup>1</sup> having the wind at NNE much wind & we tryed to the westward till 10 o'clock at night & then we laid our ship's head to the eastward having the wind at NW. Very much wind still and at 8 o'clock in the morning we set our foresail again.

27th day being Saturday the course we made good this 24 hours is NW by N 6 leagues having the wind variable from the ENE to W by S. Indifferent weather, little wind.

28th day being the Lord's Day at noon we were by observation in the latitude of 61 degrees and the course we made good this 24 hours is NW-Wly 20 leagues having the wind variable from the W & by S to the SW by S with some rain & gusts and at noon the Faroe Islands did bear NNW about 6 leagues off and the little Island that is called the Diamond<sup>2</sup> did bear N & by W of us.

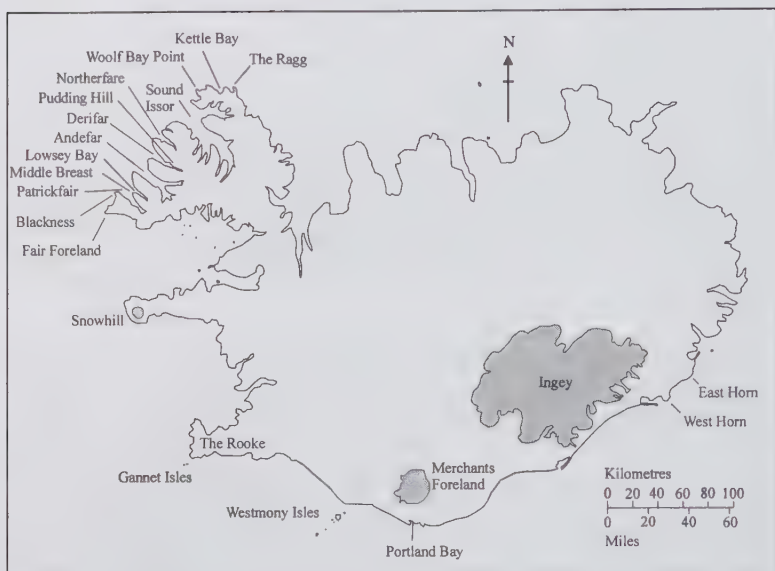
29th day the SW end of Faroe did bear NE and by E about 4 leagues off & the course we made good this 24 hours is W by N 19 leagues having the wind variable from the SW & by S to the NE much wind & rain. Bad weather in May.

30th day being Tuesday we had the wind variable from the NW to the NE and the course we made good this 24 hours is NW by W – ½ Wly & about 8 leagues having much wind rain & gusty so that we were constrained to try with our main course.

31st day being Wednesday at noon we were by observation in the latitude of 62 degrees and 30 minutes & the course we made good this 24 hours is NW by N 22 leagues having the wind variable from the W by N to the S a fresh gale.

<sup>1</sup>A trysail: a small sail usually set in place of the mizzen topsail to allow a ship to lie-to or 'try' in a gale. Trying was slightly different from lying-to, in that it involved an attempt to keep the ship in the trough of the waves during a storm. It therefore involved slightly more forward motion than lying to.

<sup>2</sup>Lítla Dímun, Faroes.



II Map of Iceland showing place names used by English fishermen of the seventeenth century

*June the 1st – C54*

1st day being Thursday at 4 o'clock in the morning we saw Iceland & we fell with the West Horn<sup>1</sup> and at noon Ingey<sup>2</sup> did bear NW about 5 leagues off we having the wind variable from the ENE to the NE a fresh gale. This day we left our convoys they steering for the east part & we for the west part to see & speak with the rest of the fishery that were in Iceland before we came which were those that were put into Newcastle & Berwick by the enemy & about 2 o'clock we lay becalmed then we hoisted out our pinnace & caught about a score of fish & at 4 o'clock the wind came up at ENE & we steered away W by S for the Merchants Foreland<sup>3</sup> which is distant about 15 leagues. All the land covered with snow.

2nd day being Friday the course we made good this 24 hours is WSW–Sly 8 leagues having the wind variable from the ENE to the SW & at noon Ingey did bear N of us. Calm part of the time.

<sup>1</sup>Vesturhorn.

<sup>2</sup>Vatnajökull.

<sup>3</sup>Probably Mýrdalsjökull.

*June 3rd – C54*

3rd day being Saturday the course we made good this 24 hours is WNW 2 degrees Nly 10 leagues having the wind S & SW & by W a fresh gale & at noon the Merchants Foreland did bear W of us 6 leagues off then were we in Portland Bay<sup>1</sup> 2 leagues from the shore & we had great current that set against us that did set us away to the eastward. This land in Portland Bay is low land & it makes in hummocks & there is a great fresh<sup>2</sup> comes down the mountains when the snow melts and runs into the sea.

4th day being the Lord's Day the course we made good this 24 hours is WNW 3 degrees Wly having the wind variable from the SW by W to the ESE. Much wind rain very thick weather & at 8 o'clock in the morning the westernmost part of the Westmony Islands<sup>3</sup> did bear of us NE by N 2 leagues and we steered away NW by N & sometimes NW for the Rooke.<sup>4</sup>

5th day being Monday the course we made good this 24 hours is NNW 7 leagues having the wind variable from the ESE to the NW fair weather & at noon the eastmost part of the Gannet Isles<sup>5</sup> did bear NNE about 2 leagues off & the westernmost maketh like a ship & there is a ledge of rocks for we did see them break & there is 2 islands more to the westward of them 2 which make 4 in all that we did see & the southmost of them 2 westmost high & steep but the eastmost is low & smooth land & Snowhill<sup>6</sup> did bear N by WNly & N by W due from the small island that maketh like a sail but when you are in the midst of the channel betwixt the Rooke & the eastern island then Snowhill point will bear NNW off & the distance betwixt the Rooke & the eastmost island is about 7 mile & the Rooke & the eastmost island ENE- $\frac{1}{2}$ Ely & WSW-Wly one of another & so doeth the westernmost island of the Rooke within  $\frac{1}{2}$  a point and we had a rush of a tide it did set away NNW amongst the shore & we were through by 6 o'clock at night fair weather & at 8 o'clock we heaved the lead & had 60 fathoms small black sand then we were about a league off the eastmost island and the Gannet Islands did bear S by W-Wly & at 9 o'clock at night the wind came up at WNW. Little wind & very fair weather.

<sup>1</sup>Dyrhólaey (alias Portland).

<sup>2</sup>A flood of fresh water flowing into the sea.

<sup>3</sup>Vestmannaeyjar (alias Vestemann Isles).

<sup>4</sup>Reykjanestá.

<sup>5</sup>Fuglasker (alias Eldeyjar).

<sup>6</sup>Snæfellsjökull.

6th day being Tuesday at noon the course we made good this 24 hours is N 21 leagues having the wind variable from the WNW to the SSW a fresh gale & at noon Snowhill foot did bear N of us about 5 leagues off & at 4 o'clock in the afternoon we were abreast of Snowhill foot about a mile & ½ off and we had very thick weather & the wind at SSE with rain & foggy & at 6 o'clock in the evening we saw a small Flemish vessel that did belong to Rotterdam, the master's name of her was Mume (as diverse in our ship that know him) for he used to trade there. He lowered his maintopsail to us & stood away. Where up we fired a gun then he answered me again with another but would by no means speak with us. So I fired another gun fair by him thinking that he would have spoken with us but he hoisted up his sails higher & cut away his boat fearing that he should have received harm by us. So when I saw that he was so fearful & not willing to speak with us we stood away our course which was N by W for Fair Foreland.<sup>1</sup> This Fleming did speak with some of our convoys but by no means would speak with us.

7th day being Wednesday at noon the course we made good this 24 hours is NNE 25 leagues having the wind at S for the most part of the time and at 4 o'clock the Fair Foreland did bear SE by S of us about a league off & at 11 o'clock in the forenoon the next morning we spoke with Master Allin<sup>2</sup> of Yarmouth. Then Derifar<sup>3</sup> did bear E by S about 5 leagues off & at 12 o'clock at night we came to an anchor fair by Derifar in 24 fathoms oozy ground<sup>4</sup> & fair by the S point we sounded and had 15 fathoms & as we stood into the eastward we had 25 fathoms sand and then the wind came to the SE which blows right out of the harbour.

### *June the 8th C54*

8th day being Thursday about a 11 o'clock we spoke with Master Allin & then we weighed our anchor having the wind at NW & we went into the harbour of Derifar & the inlet lieth NW & SE & the cause of our going in was to water and ballast our ship for indeed she was very light, for it was such foul weather at Yarmouth Roads that we could not ballast our ship there. And when we came into this harbour the country people were very fearful of us & durst not come aboard of us for they had warning to

<sup>1</sup>Bjargtangar.

<sup>2</sup>Nicholas Allin. He was apparently a respected figure in the fishery being mentioned several times in the journal. He was also the author of a letter of 12 April which was forwarded by Major William Burton to the Admiralty Commission: *Cal. S.P. Domestic, Commonwealth*, 1654, p. 111.

<sup>3</sup>Dýrafjörður.

<sup>4</sup>Muddy ground.

the contrary from their justices of the country and they much inquired whether his highness the Lord Protector or the Lord Fairfax is the greatest authority and are very inquisitive to know where Charles Stewart is or whether he be in Denmark or no & those that came aboard of our ship told me that there was 2 Holland ships about the land that had been coping<sup>1</sup> with the country people before the ship came that usually comes to receive custom for the King of Denmark every year but as yet there was none come for that purpose for it was very foul weather & much ice upon the coast & likewise all the land covered with snow so that there was some of our men that had been there 20 times never did see the like before at this time of the year. Moreover the country people told me that they greatly feared that the King of Denmark's council would rise, especially if in case that they should have war with the English nation & for as much as I could gather from them that they do esteem very much of our nation & will not hear of any war with us, to which I answered that there was a peace concluded betwixt the English nation & the Dutch & likewise with the King of Denmark which did mightily rejoice them and yet they were very doubtful of us till that they hear out of Denmark by the King's ship that comes yearly to receive the King's Custom every year & would hardly let us have anything for our moneys for refreshing.

9th day being Friday we riding in Derifar we got aboard of us good store of ballast & fitted our ship for the taking in of water. This harbour is a very good harbour and it lieth SE and NW into it and you may run in as far as it is convenient & ride land locked for all winds & when you are as far in as a hill that is called Pudding Hill<sup>2</sup> then you may luff up & water riseth about 8 foot in the harbour.

10th day being Saturday we got all our water aboard by 12 o'clock at night and all things fitted in our ship ready to set sail, only the wind was contrary.

11th day being the Lord's Day we kept according to our duty & about 10 o'clock at night the wind came up at SE a fresh gale then we got up our anchors & set sail to go to our convoys.

12th day being Monday we having got to sea the wind came up at NE by N & it did increase to a mighty storm so that we could not hold it up for our course was to lie E by N being bound for the Ragg<sup>3</sup> to our convoys

<sup>1</sup>Exchanging or bartering.

<sup>2</sup>? Höfði.

<sup>3</sup>Hornvík.

as we supposed to be there but were constrained to put into harbour again as the pilot & master held it most fitting & so we put into Derifar again.

13th day being Tuesday we weighed anchor out of Derifar the violent storm being done we turned it out having the wind at N by W & so we plyed<sup>1</sup> it out to the Eastward but in the afternoon the wind veered to the E and E by S yet being fair weather we still kept plying it up hoping for a better wind but we gained very little.

*June the – 14th C54*

14th day being Wednesday we lay becalmed off Derifar & it did bear S of us 10 mile off & that breath of wind that was it was at NE with some rain & we heaved the lead & had 30 fathoms foul ground.

15th day being Thursday at noon we were about 3 leagues off the Sound Issor<sup>2</sup> & the course we made good this 24 hours is E-½Nly 6 leagues having the wind variable from the ENE to the E with rain & thick weather little wind & sometimes calm & about 4 o'clock in the afternoon the wind came up at WSW a fair gale & at 8 o'clock at night the Ragg did bear ESE about 5 leagues of us & the wind blew fresh & we did bear a good sail only to meet with our convoys & about 12 o'clock at night the Ragg did bear SSE of us about a league off & the harbour's mouth was frozen & there was a whole land of ice that did reach to the NW by W of us & it did drive upon us & the east point of the Ragg<sup>3</sup> did bear SE & by E of us & it pleased God that when we came near the shore the wind came up at SW by S & then we stood to the westward having but little wind so by providence we shunned the ice otherwise we might have endangered all.

16th day being Friday at noon Wolf Bay Point<sup>4</sup> did bear S of us about 2 mile off & the course we made good this 24 hours is ENE having the wind variable from the WSW to the NE a fair gale but at night it came up more northerly. We sounded & had 30 fathoms water.

17th day being Saturday Kettle Bay<sup>5</sup> did bear SE by S about 3 leagues & the course we made good this 24 hours is ENE-½Nly having the wind

<sup>1</sup>Ply: to beat up against the wind.

<sup>2</sup>Ísafjarðardjúp.

<sup>3</sup>'Ragg Point': Horn (alias Nord Cap).

<sup>4</sup>? Straumnes.

<sup>5</sup>? Hælavík Bay.

variable upon most points of the compass & some time calm & at 4 o'clock in the afternoon the body of Kettle Bay did bear N by E about 6 leagues off & this day we spoke with some of our convoys namely Master Hodge & Master Kendall of Yarmouth & there was another at an anchor in Kettle Bay. We had very uncertain weather with rain & gusts & a great current that did set us to the eastward so that we got very little to the westward this 24 hours although we endeavoured by all means possible to get clear of the ice & when the current set to the westward it came so fast upon us that we had much ado to keep clear of it.

18th day being the Lord's Day we were by observation in the latitude of 66 degrees 30 minutes having the wind at SW & fresh gale and a great current that did set us away to the eastward so that we could not keep it up any longer & about 8 o'clock in morning we did bear up for the Ragg again and about 2 o'clock in the afternoon it did bear ESE of us about 3 leagues & there was a great land of ice to leeward of us where we went into the Ragg and as we stood into the bay we kept our lead and had 15 fathoms fair aboard the shore – on the west point black sand and as we stood further into the bay we had 35 fathoms black sand too but we stood further into the bay where our convoys did ride and came to an anchor in 15 fathoms small black sand then the wester point did bear NW of us and the eastermost point did bear NNE of us so that we ride open but 6 points to the seaward. Our convoys they did bear up the day before for they could not hold it up any longer & having the wind at SW we were very fearfull that the ice would have come in upon us for it did reach from the main land to the westward as far as we could see it. And this day going into the Ragg we took up a small whale that had been struck for she had a harping iron in her and we being near the harbour we towed it in and coped it away<sup>1</sup> to those poor islanders that lives in that barren place for sheep for our men. Now these poor creatures no sooner had it but they cut it up & went & boiled it & ate it most savourly.<sup>2</sup> Bad commons.

*June the 19th C54*

19th day being Monday the wind at S-SW much wind at sea & we saw the land of ice, upon our deck, not above 2 leagues and a ½ off & the wind veered to the NW then we were very fearful that the ice would have driven into the bay where we rode so I sent up our gunner with some other of our men upon the hills to discover how far the ice did reach and when

<sup>1</sup>To exchange or barter away.

<sup>2</sup>'Savourly': with relish or enjoyment.

they came aboard again they told me that they could see no end of it and likewise it stretched itself close aboard the shore. This day we gathered a boat's lading of drift wood for we wanted it.

20th day being Tuesday we had the wind at SW & WNW & so to the NW much wind in the offing & because I would inform myself the better and others whom it might concern I went with the pilot & some more of our ship's company to the top of a very high mountain to see how far the ice was off & how far it stretched itself but I could discern no end of it and as our gunner said, so it was, for it stretched itself close aboard the shore all alongst to the southeast of the Ragg & I spoke with some of the country people & they told me that there was so much ice to the eastward that there was no passage for ship nor boat. This day we gathered 3 boats lading of drift wood that lay alongst the shore and in the evening the wind came to the WNW again, thick foggy & rain.

21st day being Wednesday we had a great storm of wind about 2 o'clock in the morning it being a very fret<sup>1</sup> of wind so that we were constrained to lower our yards and top masts and veer out our best bower shot and let fall another anchor and our convoy's anchors came home so that they were forced to veer out their cables to the bitter-end & about 5 o'clock in the morning the storm broke up so we got up our yards & topmasts.

22nd day being Thursday we set sail out of the Ragg about 8 o'clock in the morning having the wind at ESE a fine gale & as we stood off we see the great land of ice again and it stretched itself from the ENE to the NW very high it was about 2 leagues off & then Kettle Bay did bear S & by E of us & about 2 o'clock Master Allin of Yarmouth came aboard of us & brought one of his men that was not well to our chirurgeon<sup>2</sup> to see if he could do him any good. So Master Allin and I did discourse to gather about our going to the eastward & he said that there was no hope for us to go about to the eastward this year & likewise to more of our convoys that were with us in at the Ragg: namely Master Kendall & Master Hodg did go up to the top of a very high hill to discover if it were possible to sail to the eastward or no but when they came down they told me there was no hope to pass this year for the ice.

23rd day being Friday about noon we were abreast of the Sound Issor and it did bear SE of us about 3 leagues off and the course we made good this

<sup>1</sup>A gust or squall.

<sup>2</sup>Surgeon.

24 hours is SW & by W 4 leagues having the wind variable from the ESE to the SW by W little wind & we sounded and had 60 fathoms water, foul ground.

*June – the 24th – C54*

24th day being Saturday at noon the course we made good this 24 hours is SW by W 5 leagues having the wind variable from the WSW to the SE & in the morning we spoke with Master Chamberlin of Yarmouth & at noon the west point of Issor did bear ESE of us about 10 mile & in the evening we had much wind at NE & by N & we stood in for the shore with our low sails.

25th day being the Lord's Day at noon the west point of the Sound Issor did bear E by S of us about 4 leagues off so that little way that we did make this 24 hours was about a league WSW having the wind variable from the N to the ENE & at 4 o'clock in the afternoon Derifar did bear SE of us about 10 mile off.

26th day being Monday at noon we were about 4 leagues off Derifar & it did bear SE by S of us & about 3 o'clock in the afternoon we came to an anchor in Notherfare<sup>1</sup> in 16 fathoms black Sand & the west point did bear NW by N of us & the eastermost point did bear NNE of us & we did ride a mile from the west shore & there came in 2 of our convoys viz Master Lacey & Master Genings one master in the *Godspeed* & the other in the *Peter* both of Yarmouth. Now there was more that laboured to come into that harbour but could not fetch it for it was a great storm & they could bear but little sail & so were constrained to go to leeward. This harbour lieth SE & NW and you may ride land locked for all winds & good ground to anchor in.

27th day being Tuesday we mended our sails & rigging & got a boat's lading of water aboard we had very much wind at WSW all day.

28th day being Wednesday we set sail out of Northerfare with our convoys having the wind at SE.

29th day being Thursday at noon we were by observation in the latitude of 65 degrees & 54 minutes and the course we made good this 24 hours is W by N 4 leagues having the wind variable from the SE to the NW &

<sup>1</sup>Önundarfjörður.

at noon Andefar<sup>1</sup> did bear SSE 11 mile off. Little wind & we sounded & had 40 fathoms water.

30th day being Friday at noon Andefar did bear SE by S 3 leagues off & the course we made good this 24 hours is W by N½W 7 miles having the wind variable from the NW to the SW & we spoke with Master Allin of Yarmouth and he told me that one of our convoys that had put into the Ragg to wood was forced to set his topmasts to get clear of the ice for it was got as far as Kettle Bay from the Ragg.

*July the first C54*

1st day being Saturday we were about 8 mile off Lowsey Bay<sup>2</sup> & the course we made good this 24 hours is SW by S 3 leagues having the wind variable from the SW to the NE & about 3 of the clock in the afternoon it blew so much wind that we were constrained to put into Lowsey Bay again and at 5 o'clock at night we came to an anchor again & the Middle Brest<sup>3</sup> did bear SW by W. We anchored about ½ a mile from the shore in very good ground.

*July the 2nd C54*

2nd day being the Lord's Day we ride still & in the afternoon there came in the *Brimmerman* one of the King of Denmark's ships & stood into Patrickfair<sup>4</sup> which is a harbour near Lowsey Bay.

3rd day being Monday we had the wind variable round the compass with rain. Notwithstanding I sent our pinnace & a Master Mathew to Patrickfair to hear what I could gather from the King of Denmark's ship that came in the day before. So when our boat came aboard them they showed themselves very joyful to see us & did much rejoice because of the peace that was concluded as well for their nation as with Holland & with all drank his Excellency's<sup>5</sup> health with all the rest of the good peoples of England & said his Excellency might be compared to that valiant King of Sweden.

<sup>1</sup>Arnarfjörður.

<sup>2</sup>Tálknafjörður.

<sup>3</sup>Tálkni.

<sup>4</sup>Patreksfjörður.

<sup>5</sup>The Lord Protector, Oliver Cromwell.

4th day being Tuesday we were abreast of Lowsey Bay. We had the wind variable round the compass with much rain & thick weather, we sounded & had 20 fathoms.

5th day being Wednesday we were about 3 leagues off Blackness<sup>1</sup> & it did bear SE by S of us & we lay driving to & again about our convoys & at noon we spoke with Master Barweek of Yarmouth & he told me that he did meet with the great land of ice to the eastward. This 24 hours we had the wind variable round the compass with much rain thick weather & foggy.

6th day being Thursday at noon we were 10 mile off Andefar & it did bear ESE of us & the course we make good this 24 hours is NE by E having the wind at S & SW little wind & some time calm.

7th day being Friday at noon we were about 3 leagues off Andefar and the west point of it did bear ESE of us & the course we made good this 24 hours is SW by W having the wind variable & part of the time calm. This day we buried one Thomas Tomson that did belong to Nicholas Allin's bark of Yarmouth. This man being sick was desirous to come aboard of us hoping that our chirurgeon could have done him good but his time was come & he departed this life.

8th day being Saturday we came to an anchor off Lowsey Bay in 15 fathoms gross sand<sup>2</sup> & it was so foggy that we could not see two ships length about us & at 2 o'clock it did clear up & then we were about 2 mile off the shore & the E point did bear ENE about 2 leagues off having the wind variable from the NE to the SW & to the SE & the course we made good this 24 hours is SE by S 3 leagues & about 3 o'clock in the afternoon we weighed our anchor again and towed into Lowsey Bay having a current with us which did set away SSW a soaking stream & at 6 o'clock at night it grew calm and then we came to an anchor again in 17 fathoms gross sand & at 4 o'clock in the morning we weighed anchor again having a little breeze at NW & after we had sailed about 3 mile we were fain<sup>3</sup> to come to anchor again because of the fog & current & little wind.

<sup>1</sup>Blakknes (alias Straumnes).

<sup>2</sup>Dense or thick sand.

<sup>3</sup>Obliged.

*July the 9th C54*

9th day being the Lord's Day at 8 o'clock in the morning we came to an anchor in Lowsey Bay in 15 fathoms oozy ground<sup>1</sup> & we rode about 3 quarters of a mile from the shore & the Middle Breast did bear W-Nly of us & Blackness did bear W by N of us and the northland did bear NW½Nly so that we scarce rode 4 points open & we had the wind at NW.

10th day being Monday we scraped our ship with out board<sup>2</sup> & set up our shrouds having the wind at NW.

11th day being Tuesday it was calm & foggy all the morning we fetched a boat's lading of water we had a little breath of wind at NW. This morning there came aboard one Paul Johnson, one of the Justices of the Peace of the country. He did belong to Andifar, he is very solid man & one that hath great respect in his country and likewise he hath been a traveller in Denmark & Holland & diverse other places & he told me that if the wars had continued still they should have desired to have been protected by the English nation rather than the Danes, for they say that they have found more friendship from the English nation than from the Danish nation & he told me that the *Brimmerman* told him that our nation was the gloriest nation in all the world for that they had conquered the Dutch who thought themselves to be conquerors of all the world & he said moreover that they in Iceland were very fearful that there should have a power been sent forth of England to have plundered their country but he thanked god for a peace & so he went his way.

12th day being Wednesday it was calm & foggy not any wind stirring all the day.

13th day being Thursday it was stark calm with fogs so that we could not see our buoys.

14th day being Friday we set sail out of Lowsey Bay having a little breeze at SE but it died away again so that we were forced to tow with both our boats till 9 of the clock & then the wind came up at NNE so we stretch it off to sea & at noon Blackness did bear S & by W about 2 mile off & there we had the wind at NE a fresh gale & we did bear a good sail because we would speak with our convoys & to see how they did do & about 6 o'clock

<sup>1</sup>Muddy ground.

<sup>2</sup>The ship's external woodwork was thoroughly cleaned with metal scrapers.

at night we spoke with Richard Boon of Yarmouth & I sent our boat aboard of him to hear what good fishing they had & he sent me word that 4 barks had made their voyage & gone in to Derifar the place of meeting after they had made their voyage & so set sail from thence with their convoy & he said moreover that, they that wanted most of their fish, did not want above 2000 and he did hope that he & all the rest of the barks would be ready toward the later end of this month so we stood into shore & as we stood in we see 4 of our convoys more.

15th day being Saturday we were 2 leagues off the south breast of Andifar & it did bear ESE & the course we made good this 24 hours is NE 10 miles having the wind variable from the NE to the N & about 7 o'clock at night we came to an anchor in Derifar in 33 fathoms good ground & there was 3 of our convoys namely Master Kendall, Master Hodg and Master Jeney. These had made their voyage & came in there it being the place of meeting after their voyage made & from thence with their convoy for England.

*July 16th – C54*

16th day being the Lord's Day we rode still doing those duties that did belong unto us.

17th day being Monday we got some water & ballast aboard for we wanted a little ballast.

18th day being Tuesday Master Chamberlin of Yarmouth came from Northerfare he having made his voyage & he came aboard and desired me to spare him a carpenter the which I did and so he sailed a little above Pudding Hill & then hauled his bark ashore & trimmed her.

19th day being Wednesday we had the wind at SE with rain & thick weather Master Chamberlin came down into the harbour having trimmed his bark & stopped a leak that was in her.

20th day being Thursday Master Boone of Yarmouth came into Derifar he having made his voyage & in the afternoon Nicholas Allin of Yarmouth came in he having made his voyage likewise.

21st day being Friday about 4 o'clock in the morning we with all our convoys weighed anchor out of Derifar but there was one of our convoys namely Master Lacey of Yarmouth that was riding in Lowsey Bay. We

had the wind at NNE and at noon Blackness did bear S & by W of us about 5 miles off & the course we made good this 8 hours is SW by W 5 or 6 leagues and when we came open of Lowsey Bay we edged in & fired a gun & lay by the lee for the bark that was riding there in the mean time 5 of our convoys that came out of Derifar with us made all sail they could & run away although the bark made all haste as possible might be & about 2 o'clock in the afternoon we filled & stood away our course & at 6 o'clock at night the Fair Foreland did bear east of us the wind then being at N a fair gale.

22nd day being Saturday at noon we were about 4 leagues off Snowhill & it did bear NNE of us & the course we made good this 24 hours is SSW 4 degrees Wly 21 leagues & a mile having the wind variable from the NNE to the NW fair weather.

23rd day being the Lord's Day, the Rooke did bear N-½Wly of us & the course we made good this 24 hours is S 4 degrees Wly 21 leagues having the wind variable from the NW to the W fair weather & in the morning we saw a ship at an anchor to the eastward of the Rooke & about 10 o'clock we were between the Rooke & the Gannet Islands & the 2 westernmost of the Gannet Islands did bear W & by S-½Sly one of another are distant from the Rooke about 4 leagues & the easternmost of them 2 islands is a smooth island & the westernmost of is a steep rock & it did bear E & by N of us about 2 leagues off & the 2 easternmost of the Gannet Islands doeth bear WNW & ESE one of another & it is foul ground between them and the westernmost is the highest & the slenderest and when they were both in one then the Rooke did bear ENE and it is about 3 leagues distance between the easternmost island & the Rooke. This day about 8 o'clock at night we came up with one of the King of Denmark's men of war. He saluted us with a gun and I did thank him with another and so we parted he standing in for the shore & we kept on our course.

*July the 24th – C54*

24th day being Monday at noon the westernmost of the Westmony Islands did bear E of us about 6 leagues off & the course we made good this 24 hours is SSE 17 leagues having the wind at NW fair weather little wind & at 8 o'clock at night Westmony Islands did bear NNE of us about 5 leagues off & we had the wind at W a small gale and we steered away SE.

25th day being Tuesday at noon Westmony Islands did bear NNW about 9 leagues off and the course we made good this 24 hours is SE by E 9 leagues having the wind variable from the W to the SW little wind & part of the time calm.

26th day being Wednesday at noon the Merchants Foreland did bear NNE of us about 8 leagues off & the course we made good this 24 hours is SSE 10 leagues having the wind variable from the SW to the S little wind all the time.

From the 26th to the 27th being Thursday the course we made good this 24 hours is S and by E 7 leagues having the wind variable from the S and so to the ESE with some rain & at noon the Merchants Foreland did bear N 4 degrees Ely 15 leagues off and we were by judgment in the latitude of 62 degrees & 20 minutes.

28th day being Friday at noon we were by judgment in the latitude of 62 degrees & 7 minutes & the course we made good this 24 hours is SE by S 5 leagues having the wind variable from the SE to the SW & by S. Foul weather much wind & rain & fog we lay a try from 3 o'clock in the morning till 8 of the clock with much wind & a grown sea & at 8 o'clock we tacked & stood to the eastward having the wind at S & by W and SSW.

29th day being Saturday we were by observation in the latitude of 63 degrees & 30 minutes having the wind at S & by W & S by E a great sea but little wind & the course we made good this 24 hours is NE by N 20 leagues.

30th day being the Lord's Day at noon we were by observation in the latitude of 63 degrees and 15 minutes & the course we made good this 24 hours is 8 degrees Ely 16 leagues having the wind at S & SSE very foggy so that we could not see the land we being then abreast of the East Horn<sup>1</sup> it bearing NW of us about 10 leagues off.

31st day being Monday at noon we were by judgment in the latitude of 62 degrees & 22 minutes & the course we made good this 24 hours is SE by E 25 leagues having the wind variable from the SE to the SW & by W with some rain.

<sup>1</sup>Austurhorn.

*August the first C54*

1st day being Tuesday at noon we were in the latitude of 62 degrees & 40 minutes & the course we made good this 24 hours is ESE–Ely 13 leagues having the wind variable from the SW & the NW with some rain.

*August the 2nd – C54*

2nd day being Wednesday at noon we were by judgment in the latitude of 62 degrees & 15 minutes and the course we made good this 24 hours is S 4 degrees Wly 8 leagues 1 mile having the wind variable from the NW to the SE by S. This day we saw the sun in the eclipse.

3rd day being Thursday at noon we were by judgment in the latitude of 62 degrees and 44 minutes & the course we made good this 24 hours is NE  $\frac{1}{2}$  Ely 17 leagues having the wind variable from the S by E to the W by N with much wind and rain & bad weather we lay a try from 12 o'clock at noon till two o'clock at night we saw Faroe about 6 leagues off and we heaved the lead and had 74 fathoms white sand and some small shells.

4th day being Friday at noon we were by observation in the latitude of 62 degrees & 5 minutes & the course we made good this 24 hours is S by E 26 leagues having the wind variable from the WNW to the SW with some rain with thick & hazy weather.

5th day being Saturday at noon we were about 4 leagues to the northward of Meckness<sup>1</sup> & the course we made good this 24 hours E–Sly 10 leagues having the wind at S & by E and we stood away to the eastward thinking to have gone through St Thomas' Sound<sup>2</sup> but it fell calm with rain & thick weather & we sounded & had 60 fathoms foul ground.

6th day being the Lord's Day at noon we were in sight of the SW head of Faroe & at 4 o'clock at night it did bear NE of us about 5 leagues off & the course we made good this 24 hours is S 19 leagues having the wind variable from the S by E to the N by W thick weather & rain & we steered away SE for Orkney. This day we had a strong current set against us to the NW so that we could scarce get ahead.

<sup>1</sup>Mykines, westernmost island of the Faroes.

<sup>2</sup>Presumably one of the sounds that run NW–SE dividing the main islands of the Faroes.

7th day being Monday at noon we were by judgment in the latitude of 59 degrees & 50 minutes & the course we made good this 24 hours is SE by E 35 leagues having the wind variable from the NW by N to the NW by W.

8th day being Tuesday at noon we were about 4 leagues off the Sound Bursey<sup>1</sup> and it did bear S by W of us & the course we made good this 24 hours is SE 19 leagues having the wind variable from the NW by W to the SE & at 12 o'clock at night we heaved the lead & had 35 fathoms white shelly ground.

9th day being Wednesday at noon we were about 4 leagues to the southward of the Start Point<sup>2</sup> & it did bear NW of us & the course we made good this 24 hours is SE by E–Ely 11 leagues having the wind variable from the SE to the WNW & WSW and we did what we could to go through St Magnus<sup>3</sup> but the wind would not favour us & we stood off by a wind having much wind at WSW with rain & foul weather & at 12 o'clock at night we bore up and came about the Start & at 8 o'clock in the morning the Start did bear W of us a mile & ½ off & at noon we spoke with Master Todd of Wells he came from the eastward & he told me that all the barks were well to the eastward & that they had made their voyage & were ready to come home & he told me that there was very much ice to the eastward. This morning at 6 o'clock we saw a ship but she stood to the westward by a wind so we could not speak with her & Master Tod told me that they would hasten away from the eastward for they did not expect our coming because of the ice & our rendezvous was to be at Orkney but we could not gain it by reason of the foul weather.

*August the 10th – C54*

10th day being Thursday at noon we were by judgment about 9 leagues short of Buchan Ness & the course we made good this 24 hours is S–Wly having the wind variable from the NW by W to the W & S fair weather.

11th day being Friday at noon we were about 2 leagues off Fraserburgh & it did bear S by E of us and the course we made good this 24 hours is S by W 8 leagues having the wind variable from the W by S to the S by

<sup>1</sup>North Sound, Orkney Isles.

<sup>2</sup>Start Point, Isle of Sanday, Orkneys.

<sup>3</sup>'St Magnus Sound', see nn. 3 and 4 on p. 108.

E & sometime SE with rain & about 11 o'clock we spoke with the *Briar*,<sup>1</sup> one of the State's frigates, she was bound for Inverness.

12th day being Saturday at noon we were about 4 leagues off Peterhead & it did bear SW by S  $\frac{1}{2}$  Wly & the course we made good this 24 hours is E by S 8 leagues  $\frac{1}{2}$  having the wind at SE. Much wind with rain & foggy. We saw a ship but we spoke not with her.

13th day being the Lord's Day at noon Peterhead did bear NW  $\frac{1}{2}$  Wly off us about 3 leagues &  $\frac{1}{2}$  off us & the course we made good this 24 hours is S by W 5 leagues having the wind at SE. Much wind & rain we tried from noon till 5 o'clock in the evening & then we tacked & stood to the westwards.

From the 13th— to the 14th day being Monday we tried & our way was east having a great storm of wind & rain with the wind variable from the SE to the WSW. We tried 10 leagues which was from 12 o'clock at night till 12 o'clock at noon & at 5 o'clock at night we tacked & stood to the westward having the wind at SW by S. Very much wind & all the way we made of is E 16-leagues in all.

From the 14th to the 15th at noon being Tuesday the course we made good this 16 hours is WNW 10 leagues having the wind variable from the SW to the S by W & by judgment Buchan Ness did bear WNW about 10 leagues off. Very much wind, bad weather.

From 15th to the 16th being Wednesday at noon the course we made good this 24 hours W by N 7 leagues having the wind variable from the S by W to the S by E with much rain.

From the 16th— to the 17th being Thursday at noon we were by observation in the latitude of 56 degrees & 20 minutes & the course we made good this 24 hours is S 27 leagues having the wind variable from the SE to the NW. Fair weather.

18th day being Friday at noon we were about 8 leagues off the Tees and it did bear SW by W of us and the course we made good this 24 hours is S by E 28 leagues having the wind variable from the NW to the W.

<sup>1</sup>*Briar*, 16-gun ship: Colledge, *Ships of the Royal Navy*, Vol. I, p. 89.

*August the 19th – C54*

19th day being Saturday we were about 7 miles off Cromer & it did bear SW by W of us & the course we made good this 24 hours is S by E 26 leagues<sup>1</sup> having the wind variable from the W to the NNE a fresh gale this day we came into Yarmouth Roads having all our convoys in before us only one which did not sail so well as the rest which bark we towed till we came to Winterton Ness & then we cast her off because of going through the Narrow. There we towed 7 vessels between Winterton Ness & Yarmouth Roads that were cast away the night before we came into Yarmouth Roads. Now our provision is near expended, which I am to certify your Honours likewise, so that we have not above 10 days provision remaining.

<sup>1</sup>This appears to have been amended to 'S°E by E°st 13 leges'. However, this makes no sense given that at noon on 18 August the ship was about 8 leagues NE by E of the River Tees and by the following day she was 7 miles NE by E of Cromer. The ship must therefore have travelled at least 20 leagues in the previous 24 hours. A league was three nautical miles and this unit was much used in estimating distances (*The Sailor's Word Book*, ed. W. H. Smyth, reprinted, London, 2005).



## IV

# NEUTRALITY, SOVEREIGNTY AND JURISDICTION: TWO CASES IN THE ADMIRALTY COURT, 1798–1805

*Edited by*  
*Richard Hill*

Under Sir William Scott,<sup>1</sup> arguably the greatest Judge of its long history, the High Court of Admiralty was during the French Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars one of the most influential legal bodies in the land. It dealt not only with the technicalities of seizures in prize, but with the numerous related issues of nationality, neutrality, sovereignty and jurisdiction at a time when all those matters were frequently fluid and their application uncertain.

The law that the Court sought to administer was not the common law of England, but international law, or the law of nations as it was then (perhaps more accurately) called. The procedures of the Court, situated at Doctors' Commons, were in contested cases adversarial rather than investigative, thus following British legal tradition, but most of the evidence was documentary and witnesses were seldom called in person. Scott himself was at pains to point out the principles on which he was working; early in his incumbency he said:

I consider myself as stationed here, not to deliver occasional and shifting opinions to serve present purposes of particular national interest, but to administer with indifference that justice which the law of nations holds out without distinction to independent states.<sup>2</sup>

In consequence, Scott's judgments often had much to say on the law of nations as then understood, and many of the principles he enunciated have survived, in customary or codified form, to this day. That is not to say that he took no account of English interpretations of the law, where

<sup>1</sup>Sir William Scott, later Lord Stowell (1745–1833), Camden Reader in Ancient History, University of Oxford, 1774; Doctor of Laws, 1779; called to the Bar, Middle Temple, 1780; King's Advocate, High Court of Admiralty, 1789–98; Judge of the Admiralty Court, 1798–1828.

<sup>2</sup>C. Robinson, *Reports of Cases heard in the High Court of Admiralty under Sir William Scott* (6 vols, 1798–1808) (henceforth C. Rob), Vol. 1, p. 340.

differences existed; on such matters as the Rule of the War of 1756<sup>1</sup> or the 1753 Opinion of the Law Officers on the Silesian Loan,<sup>2</sup> he followed English practice rather than making concessions to continental contentions based upon the principle of 'free ships free goods'.

Fortunately, all Scott's major judgments survive, as reported by three authorities: Christopher Robinson, Thomas Edwards and John Dodson.<sup>3</sup> The reporters were clearly aided by Scott's habit of writing down his judgments in full. He was, by some accounts, not a fluent extempore speaker and this has been a benefit to history. While the judgments which follow are, technically, already published work, they are available only in specialised libraries and it is believed that they fall therefore within the criteria of the Navy Records Society.

They are, moreover, supplemented here by much previously unpublished material, nearly all from the National Archive. The best-documented case is the first cited, that of the *Eenrom*. Apart from the ship's log, an obvious but in this case not a negligible source, and the final prize account, there are voluminous papers which have survived because the case went before the Lords Commissioners for Appeal in Prize Causes, and all such papers from that period have been preserved. They are presented here at some length because they not only tell a fascinating story but give a flavour of colonial and sea life of the time, as well as legal background.

The second case, the *Twee Gebroeders*, has much to say on the topic of neutral waters: the rights of belligerents therein, the effectiveness of control over them, disputes over the extent of sovereignty, and Scott's own somewhat 'shifting opinions' in the face of new evidence. The ships' logs, with their widely varying treatment of a dramatic set of incidents that led to a pretty paltry prize 'take', are also indicative of differing attitudes.

### The *Eenrom*

The ship *Eenrom* was detained by HMS *Brilliant* in the latitude of Lisbon on 28 December 1798. The *Brilliant* was a 28-gun frigate constructed in

<sup>1</sup>This stated that a neutral could not, in wartime, legally engage in the trade of a belligerent not open to that neutral in peacetime: see C. John Colombos, *International Law of the Sea* (6th edn, London, 1968), p. 678.

<sup>2</sup>*Law and Custom of the Sea*, ed. R. G. Marsden (NRS, 1916), Vol. II, p. 348. The Opinion was a comprehensive document setting out in detail the English interpretation of the law on matters of enemy character, neutrality and contraband.

<sup>3</sup>C. Rob, n. 2; Thos. Edwards, *Reports of Cases heard in the High Court of Admiralty under Sir William Scott* (1 vol., 1809–12); John Dodson, *Reports of Cases heard in the High Court of Admiralty under Sir William Scott* (2 vols, 1813–28).

1777, commanded by Captain the Hon. Henry Blackwood<sup>1</sup> since shortly after the mutiny at the Nore in mid-1797. During that mutiny she had been one of the most affected ships and it is likely that Blackwood had been appointed to her as a trouble-shooter. She had been kept busy in the succeeding 18 months, but mostly on convoy and patrol duties. No prizes had come her way; a potentially lucrative cruise off Tenerife in July 1798 had ended in near-disaster when she was chased by two superior French ships and escaped only by spirited gun action and manoeuvre.<sup>2</sup>

The laconic entry in the *Brilliant*'s log for 28 December 1798 [1], recounting the capture of the *Eenrom*, covers a number of actions that were routine for any detention of a potential prize. A boat with a boarding officer would be sent to make enquiries of the detained ship; arms would be carried by the boat's crew but not by the boarding officer himself. If the officer was not satisfied with ship's papers and the answers he was getting, his commanding officer would be consulted and subsequent action taken accordingly.

In this case, it is clear from the log that suspicion existed from the start that the *Eenrom* was not what she purported to be, a Danish trading vessel from the Far East carrying a neutral cargo bound for Copenhagen. Blackwood's subsequent actions were all founded in this suspicion. The main grounds for it are to be found in the testimony of an American seaman called Porter [5], corroborated by others [4, 6], which probably were communicated originally to the boarding officer when he first made enquiries on board the *Eenrom*, but were confirmed in writing over a fortnight later. It is significant that the two principal informants, Porter and the Goanese seaman John Christian, were put on board the *Brilliant* soon after the *Eenrom* was detained, presumably to protect them from duress by the *Eenrom*'s officers.

The written depositions, made before the British Vice Consul in Lisbon when the *Brilliant* and *Eenrom* reached there in mid-January 1799, are a singular part of the case. Established procedure, laid down by statute, was that the master and one or two other persons from the detained ship should be 'examined as witnesses in preparatory' by means of the Standing Interrogatories. These were 32 sets of questions (plus two recently introduced as a result of neutral convoy and blockade measures) about the ship, her voyage, crew and cargo, which if honestly answered would give the Court a full picture on which innocence or condemnation could be based. The Interrogatories would generally be put by the captor's agent. However, for the *Eenrom* in Lisbon, that procedure was

<sup>1</sup>The Hon. Henry Blackwood, Lt. 3 Nov. 1790; Cdr 6 July 1794; Capt. 2 June 1795; RA of the Blue 4 June 1814; Bart., 1814; VA 27 May 1825; d. Dec. 1832.

<sup>2</sup>Robert Gardiner (ed.), *Nelson against Napoleon* (London, 1997), p. 54.

not followed. Instead, Blackwood engaged the British Vice Consul Arbouin to take depositions not only from the officers and supercargo of the *Eenrom* [2, 3], but from Porter, Christian and one other crew member, allegedly involved in a story more complex, violent and conspiratorial than was apparent from the cargo manifests and other ship's papers [4, 5, 6].

The *Eenrom*, still under detention, sailed in convoy for Britain in February 1799. On her arrival in Portsmouth, the Interrogatories were conducted in proper form by Blackwood's agent [7] and the case proceeded to the Admiralty Court in May. It turned on whether the cargo and its ultimate destination were wholly, or largely, Dutch – Holland being at that time a belligerent against Britain – or Danish, and therefore neutral. The testimony of the *Eenrom*'s superseded captain, reproduced here, is included in preference to that of the current captain and supercargo to include a new voice and indicate the vicissitudes of a voyage to the Far East of over two years.

Scott's judgment [8], apart from its magisterial tone in spite of the fact that he had been in office less than a year, is notable in several aspects. First, he stuck to the letter of procedure in not admitting in evidence the depositions made in Lisbon. Second, he did admit evidence from a previous case [9] that one of the men involved in the *Eenrom*'s lading was of Dutch nationality and one of their agents in Batavia. Finally, he refused to admit an implicit plea that part of the cargo was innocent and that only the other part was liable to condemnation; he condemned ship and cargo *in toto*.

Not unexpectedly, the case went to appeal, on the grounds of the alleged neutral character and destination of the cargo (or at least half of it) and therefore of its and the ship's innocence, before the Lords Commissioners of Appeal in Prize Causes. There the condemnation was affirmed on 27 March 1802. The appeal papers include the depositions made in Lisbon and it is clear from marginal annotations that the Commissioners did admit them in evidence, as they did some of the papers adduced by Scott from the previous case [9]. Documents concerning the illness and supersession of the Master, Ponsaing, were before the Appeal Court and are included as background [10–12]. Michael Fabritius, the supercargo, had put in, immediately after Scott's judgment in the High Court of Admiralty, an affidavit [13] alleging British unjust treatment and possible falsification of papers in Lisbon. The Appeal Commissioners certainly had access to this deposition but appear effectively to have dismissed it. The other paper of interest is the affidavit of Marshal Blucker, an official of the Danish Court [14], which gives an indication of the standing of 'private ventures' in the operations of trade during this period, as well perhaps of the rank-

pulling that could occur. Blucker was unsuccessful on this occasion, but it is of interest that his submission took up most of the note taken by the King's Advocate on the appeal case.<sup>1</sup>

After the failure of the appeal, the sale of the *Eenrom* and her cargo could proceed and the final accounts be drawn up [15]. This was a rich prize; Blackwood could expect to make over £6,500, his lieutenants nearly £1,000 each and a seaman of the *Brilliant* about 16 guineas. The proceeds were about ten times the average 'take' for a merchant capture.<sup>2</sup>

Blackwood must have thought the process well worth it, but he had taken huge personal risks throughout. Had the Admiralty Court accepted the Danish officers' contention that the ship and at least half the cargo were innocent; or had the Lords Commissioners of Appeal in Prize Causes accepted that the proceedings in Lisbon were so irregular as to invalidate the capture; or had the additional payments to Porter the star witness [15] come to light; then any prize money might have been dwarfed by the amount of compensation for which Blackwood, and he alone, would be liable. As Lord St Vincent wrote to Grenville in 1806, 'where one captain makes fortune by the capture of neutrals, ten are ruined; [no one else] bearing any part of the onus'.<sup>3</sup> He was prone to exaggeration, but he had a point.

### **The *Twee Gebroeders***

This was a complex case in which the rights of belligerents in and close to neutral territory (including territorial waters) loomed large. It is made no easier to understand by the fact that there were two judgments, 17 months apart, both titled *Twee Gebroeders* in Robinson's Reports, and in the latter Scott appears to have reversed his judgment in the former. The fact, as appears from the log of the *Circe* [19], is that two ships called *Twee Gebroeders* were captured, among others, during the same operation; the first trial on 29 July 1800 [20] refers to one Alberts as the master of the captured ship, while the second on 27 November 1801 [24] records the name of the master as Northolt. Thus it appears that Alberts's ship, restored by the earlier judgment on the ground that Prussia's neutral waters had been violated, got away with it, while Northolt's, condemned by the later hearing, was unlucky.

What happened initially to continue the detention of Northolt's *Twee Gebroeders* can only be a matter of speculation. But it did allow time for

<sup>1</sup>Notebook of Sir John Nicholl, HCA 30/466 (not reproduced here).

<sup>2</sup>Richard Hill, *The Prizes of War* (Stroud, Glos., 1998), p. 179.

<sup>3</sup>C. C. Lloyd (ed.), *The Naval Miscellany* Vol. IV (NRS, 1952), p. 487.

an affidavit [21] to be lodged by Commander James Boorder,<sup>1</sup> captain of *L'Espiegle*,<sup>2</sup> the British ship most involved at the 'sharp end' of the operation. This threw new light on the whole affair, and was ample ground for the trial of the second *Twee Gebroeders* to be conducted on a quite different basis from that of the first. The Court was, clearly, determined to look much more closely at the underlying questions of sovereignty and neutrality, and to this end admitted two affidavits from Prussian citizens [22, 23] which tended to support the claim that much of the water involved in the incident was indeed Prussian territory; however, Scott – who in any case had doubts on that point – was swayed by the fact that Prussia had allowed to be stationed, in those waters, several Dutch gunboats and therefore had abrogated any neutral rights she might properly have claimed. It was on this that his condemnation of Northolt's *Twee Gebroeders* seems primarily to have been based.

The two judgments, viewed from the distance of two hundred years' history in which neutral and belligerent rights went through a great deal of complex development and are still uncertain in many aspects,<sup>3</sup> are not mutually inconsistent. Scott laid down in the first the general principle that neutral territory may not be used by a belligerent as a base from which to launch attacks. In the second, he addressed the particular questions of the territoriality of the place where the capture occurred, and of whether, if such capture involved passage over neutral territorial water (but, implicitly, not basing in it), it was invalidated thereby. On both counts he decided for the captors. It is noteworthy that leading authorities on these matters quote the first case, but not the second, at some length.<sup>4</sup>

As is clear from the logs of the ships involved [16, 17, 18, 19] and from James's history,<sup>5</sup> the 'expedition' during which both *Twee Gebroeders* were captured was part of an operation lasting some months off the northern coast of Holland in which a group of British frigates, brigs and cutters acted in support of the left flank of the invading British and Russian land forces under the Duke of York, which eventually were forced to evacuate their positions in October 1799. Prussian sensitivities, in their role as a neutral at that time, were clearly at a high level and Scott, his political antennae already well developed, was no doubt well aware of

<sup>1</sup>James Boorder, Lt 12 July 1793; Cdr 8 Aug. 1796. W. James, in *The Naval History of Great Britain*, 6 vols (London, 1837), vol. 2, pp. 312 and 340, refers to him as 'captain' but there is no evidence of his being made post. He died in 1818.

<sup>2</sup>16-gun brig-sloop.

<sup>3</sup>Nicholas Tracy (ed.), *Sea Power and the Control of Trade* (NRS, 2005), *passim*.

<sup>4</sup>E.g. Colombos, *International Law of the Sea*, p. 640.

<sup>5</sup>James, *The Naval History of Great Britain*, vol. 2, pp. 312 and 340.

this; the great care and thoroughness with which he approached the second of his judgments is significant.

The taking of merchant prizes was, as the context makes clear, a subsidiary part of the operations, and indeed the preparations for mounting the 'expedition' suggest it was a one-off. In the event, it needed a great deal of hardihood and determination, both from the command and from those taking part, to get any tangible result. This may be the reason for a singular aspect of the outcome, for in the prize account [25] the only capturing ship mentioned is *L'Espiegle* and the only entitled commander is named as Boorder; yet it is clear from the logs that the boats of several ships took part in the cutting-out. Since the amount for distribution was only about £500, it looks as though common sense prevailed in the allocation of this modest sum. If so, it was to the credit of Captains Mackenzie and Winthrop of the *Pylades* and *Circe*; squabbles about entitlement in cases of joint capture were all too common.<sup>1</sup>

## Part 1

### The *Eenrom*, 1798–9

#### 1. *Log of HMS Brilliant, 28 December 1798*

[wind, position, etc.] Fresh gales and hazey. Saw a strange sail to windward gave chase Boarded her made her a Prize and detained her supposing her to be a Dutch Indiaman under Danish colours called the *Eenrom*.

#### 2. *Deposition of M. P. Fabritius, Supercargo of the Ship Eenrom*<sup>2</sup>

On the day of the date hereof personally appeared before me Francis Arbouin Vice Consul to the British Nation in the City of Lisbon Michel Pierre Fabritius who voluntarily declared upon Oath actually taken on the Holy Evangelists that he is a Dane native of Copenhagen and Subject of the King of Denmark, a married man aged thirty nine years and that his wife and family consisting of six children do reside at Copenhagen at which place he the Deponent has lived for several years last past, excepting the two last years that he has been in Batavia and other parts of

<sup>1</sup>Hill, *Prizes of War*, pp. 74–83 and 215.

<sup>2</sup>Year dates are spelt out in the original.

India, that he has never been a subject Burgher or Freeman of any other Cities or Towns, excepting Copenhagen, that on or about the fifteenth day of November 1796 he embarked at Copenhagen as Supercargo on board of the Danish ship called Eenrom whereof was Captain Joseph Anton Ponsaing a Danish subject, bound to different ports in India, and that in the course of the Voyage she touched at Plymouth, St Jago, Cape of Good Hope, and from there went to Batavia, from there to China, from China again to Batavia, and from thence to Mauritius from Mauritius to the Cape of Good Hope bound to Copenhagen, and that at her first sailing from Copenhagen as aforesaid in November 1796 she was loaded with wines, Iron and different other merchandize. That he was on board of the said ship on the twenty seventh [*sic*] December the time when she was taken and seized at sea by his Britannic Majesty's Ship Brilliant, Henry Blackwood Esq. Commander, that the ship Eenrom was bound to Copenhagen but was coming for the Port of Lisbon to wait orders from Copenhagen, if should proceed with or without Danish convoy. That she has no Commission, but a Register, Mediterranean pass and other papers and dispatches from the Danish Government, but he knoweth not of any Bill of Sales, neither does he know of whom the said ship was bought, but that she was purchased at Batavia about three years since, that the said ship was loaded partly at Batavia, partly at Mauritius and remainder at the Cape of Good Hope which lading consisted of Sugar, Coffee, Silk, Wine, Cloves, China ware, and other articles. That the said Ship and Cargo on board was taken and seized as aforesaid, as he the Deponent understands in consequence of His Excy. The Duke of Portland's proclamation bearing date the second of February 1798, and that they are brought into the port of this City of Lisbon, that the said ship sailed under Danish colours and is of the burthen of about one hundred and thirty five Danish Commerce Lasts, that there were five officers onboard belonging to the ship, three of which Danes, one German and the other he knoweth not of what Nation, four of said officers were engaged at Copenhagen by the Deponents house and the other at Batavia by him Deponent, that the Captain and First Mate have some property on board but he knoweth not if the others have any, and in regard to the sailors he does not know of what nation they are, that part of them were engaged and went on board at Copenhagen, the other at Batavia and other ports in India. That the ship is the sole property of Conrad Fabritius and Wever Danish Merchants established many years since at Copenhagen and that the greatest part of the cargo on board is also the sole property of the said Conrad Fabritius and Wever, that the Deponent has on board belonging to him three hundred and fifty bags of Coffee, fifteen barrels of Wine, eight hundred pounds weight of Cloves, five hundred pounds of Ivory, five thousand one

hundred pounds weight aloe, one hundred and seventeen Ostrich Feathers, several Vases of China and various other small articles. That the total merchandize comprising the aforementioned cargo on board of the said ship was purchased and sent on board by him the Deponent and were all consigned to the aforesaid house of Conrad Fabritius and Wever at Copenhagen, on whose account and Risk they were all, excepting the part aforementioned and he the Deponent can take upon himself to swear that at the time of Lading the same, and at this present time, and also if they shall be restored and unladen at the destined port the said goods did do and will belong to the same persons and no others, that three Bills of lading were signed for the Cargo of different goods on board, all of them true and genuine, and not any false or colourable. That no Charter Party was made for the Voyage in question, and that the papers for the said ship were delivered to Captain Henry Blackwood, that none were burnt, torn, thrown overboard, destroyed, cancelled, concealed, or attempted to be concealed, that there were three passengers on board the said ship, one whereof called John Ker a Scotchman who had been supercargo of an American ship and was received on board at Mauritius[,] Gustavus Lorentzen a Danish Captain and Daniel Tharnspeck an African, the two latter were received on board at the Cape, and that none of the said passengers had any property on board excepting what might be with their small baggage, that the Deponent understands and verily believes that the ship[’s] cargo on board in [*sic*] insured in London, that the Register Mediterranean Pass and other Papers or Documents for the said Ship were taken up at Copenhagen by Conrad Fabritius and Wever and the customary charges thereon then paid, and that no false or colourable papers of whatever nature were on board, that the said ship was built at Java and was purchased at Batavia about three years since by an agent or Captain of the aforesaid house of Conrad Fabritius and Wever for their account and Risk, the sum for which he knoweth not, that there were two small ‘Guns on the Deck for the purpose of requisite signals.

(signed) M. P. Fabritius

Sworn before me at Lisbon the twenty-second day of January

One thousand seven hundred and ninety nine

Francis Arbouin, Vice Consul

### 3. *Deposition of C. C. Fronier*<sup>1</sup>

On the day of the date hereof personally appeared before me Francis Arbouin Vice Consul to the British Nation in the City of Lisbon Christian Carl Fronier who voluntarily declared upon oath actually taken on the Holy Evangelists that he is a Native of Copenhagen a bachelor aged twenty nine years and that his place of residence when on shore is Copenhagen that he has never been naturalised under any Prince or Potentate but is a Subject of the King of Denmark. That it is about twenty seven months since he embarked on board the ship called Eenrom in the capacity of First Mate, that he was on board at the time his Britannick Majesty's Ship the Brilliant detained her, she had no Commission, but Instructions and authority from the King to furnish the seamen &c, that she was first detained in the latitude 38 [degs.] 39 [mins.][N] and longitude about 15 [degs.] 0 [mins.][W] but as to the time he does not recollect only that it is in the log book, he does not know for what reason the ship was detained. She was taken into the port of Lisbon, that she sailed under Danish colours, and had no other colours on board, and did not resist when she was taken, that the ship she was detained by is a ship of war and that there was a merchant ship in company with the Brilliant, that the master of the ship Eenrom's name was Christian Carl Fronier he first took command of the ship at China and was given possession of her by Mr Fabritius the supercargo, that she is of about one hundred and thirty five Danish Commerce Lasts, the number of sailors on board were thirty four besides passengers at the time the ship was detained as aforesaid by the Brilliant[.] he declares that when she sailed from Copenhagen there were on board twenty four whites besides twenty blacks as will appear by the ships papers but he asserts that all the whites excepting three or four were Danish subjects and those three or four Swedes, the Blacks were brought from Batavia, and of different countries whom he was bound to return again, that none of the officers or seamen had any concern with the ship or cargo further than their own private privileges to the best of his knowledge and that his own private trade consisted of four or five hundred dollars that first time he knew the ship was when he was shipped on board of her as Chief Mate that she was built in the island of Java, the ships name is the Eenrom and has been so called since the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety six that she was previously called the Prince Christian Frederick and the reason of her name being changed was because the owners choosed [*sic*] to call her after an estate they had at Copenhagen called Eenrom. The deponent further declares that she had

<sup>1</sup>Year dates are spelt out in the original.

not any other passports or sea briefs but such as are delivered. That she sailed from Copenhagen to Plymouth, the Cape of Good Hope and from thence to Batavia, and China, and then again to Batavia, from thence they meant to have gone directly to the Cape for refreshments on their way to Copenhagen, but from Damages received they put into Mauritius in the end of April 1798 (as in the log book) where they remained about three months to repair and from thence they went to the Cape, which was the last port they were in previous to her being detained by the Brilliant. When at the Cape the Danish agent gave them instructions that if they did not find an English convoy they were to go to Sta. Helena where he understood there was a Danish ship of war homeward bound, but in consequence of an embargo being laid by the British Governor on all ships they were detained for two months, but before they were ready to sail an English armed brig arrived, who informed them that the Danish convoy had already sailed from Sta. Helena, doubting the report made by the brig they left the Cape the fourth of November 1798 and steered for Sta. Helena, when near the land being spoke by an English frigate who gave them the same information as the Brig, they made the best of their way for Copenhagen but the day before they fell in with the Brilliant they determined to call in at Lisbon in hopes of finding a Danish or English convoy and they were steering for that port when met by the Brilliant, that from Copenhagen to Batavia she was first loaded with Beer, tar, Iron barrs [*sic*] cheese wine and some sheets of copper, all of which was sold at Batavia, from thence she went with a cargo of Lead, Cotton, porcelaine and other China wares, and discharged there, from China she took in a cargo of China wares porcelaine and Teas to Batavia and there discharged and took in a cargo of Sugar and Coffee in the months of February and March last past the quantity as mentioned in the papers that he knows the house of Conrad Fabritius and Wever to be the Owners of the Ship and Cargo, because he is employed by them and is authorized to draw upon them. He supposes the owners to be Danes and knows that their families have resided in Denmark for many years. The Bill of Sale was made to the present owners by Merchants of Batavia, whom the deponent does not recollect, and in the presence of Witnesses whom he does not know, the last time he saw the Bill of Sales was on the voyage going home from Batavia in 1796, but since the ship was marked and measured at Copenhagen, he supposes they are left with the owners. The Deponent does not know exactly from whom the Cargo was purchased, but it was sent on board to him by the supercargo Mr Fabritius, and he did then and does now firmly believe that the ship and cargo is truly the property of the house of Conrad Fabritius & Wever and to none others, that he has signed bills of lading for the cargo

belonging to the owners of the ship and some others for the private trade of Mr Fabritius the supercargo and duplicates of the aforementioned Bills of Lading he supposes are sent to Copenhagen, that there was no charter party signed because the ship was employed by her own owners, that he knoweth not of any others papers or writings of any kind being on board the ship but such as have been delivered and which papers he declares to be true and fair, the sea briefs and Mediterranean passes were given by the College of Commerce at Copenhagen to the owners of the ship Conrad Fabritius & Wever and the other master who made oaths on receiving them, to employ them for no other Nation, they were to last for the voyage. A small fee is paid on receiving them, they never were renewed. The ship was in Copenhagen when they were granted, and that to the best of his knowledge and belief there were not any papers, writings or any sort of articles whatever thrown overboard or in any other way destroyed or concealed to prevent suspicion, that he has sustained no loss nor can sustain any other, than his private trade by the detention of the ship, and has neither received indemnity or promise of indemnity from any person whatever, that some part if not the whole of the ship and cargo is Insured, but he does not know what of her for the whole Voyage out and home, and he believes in England, but does not know by what persons, he says that if the ship had arrived at her destination and the cargo discharged that it would have been the property (as it now is) of Conrad Fabritius & Wever, that the goods received on board at Copenhagen were sent directly from the Warehouses of the aforesaid owners to the ship, those received at Batavia and China were sent on board in Boats by the Supercargo, that when the ship put into Mauritius as before mentioned, they were obliged to unload her for accomplishing the necessary repairs, the Deponent having given the orders, that there were three passengers on board the ship, at the time of the capture none of whom were concealed. The names of which passengers were John Sher [=Ker? See 2. above] calling himself a British subject who was taken in American ship as supercargo and was then a prisoner of the French at Mauritius but obtained permission to go on board the Eenrom[,] Gustavus Lorentzen a Danish Subject commanding a vessel under Danish colours who went in to the Cape in consequence of damages received at sea and was there detained and condemned and Daniel Harlsbeck<sup>1</sup> a Native of the Cape (of a Dutch family) having a pass from the Governor, that they were all destined for Copenhagen and had no other property than their apparel, and had no concern with the ship or her cargo, that there were no persons of any description secreted

<sup>1</sup>=Tharnspeck? See [2] above.

or confined on board at the time of the ship being taken, that he has neither wrote or signed any other papers but Bills of Lading concerning the Ship or Cargo, that there are two guns (one pounders) mounted on board and that they are made use of for signals, in the hold were six short cannon with carriages either four or six pounders which they mounted while at Batavia and China to beat off the Boats of the Blacks. There were on board no other arms than about one dozen of musquets three or four pair of pistols the same number of cutlasses one barrel of gunpowder and about forty or fifty balls with a few cartridge boxes in proportion to the musquets. That to the best of his knowledge there are no other implements of war or cloathing on board, being at the time only First Mate when they were put on board at Copenhagen. That the instructions from the merchants and the authority from the King of Denmark are in the deponent's possession on board the Eenrom, and the which he has now produced. That he does not know whether the house of Conrad Fabritius & Wever before mentioned, are or are not in connection with houses in Holland. He cannot swear that they are not he supposes in case that the ship Eenrom had been found unfit to continue her voyage, that the sea briefs and Mediterranean pass might on the authority of the Danish Consul served another ship purchases[?d] for the same owners to carry home the cargo. That he neither meant to have disposed of, nor had the authority to have disposed of, all or any part of the arms or ammunition on board of the Eenrom. The Deponent further says that on the day when the Eenrom sailed from Batavia, in the month of March last past on her passage homeward, as the ship was getting under weigh, or after she was already under sail, he found two men on board whom he had not before seen, who called themselves Americans and requested to enter in the ship for the passage to Copenhagen, he agreed to give them the same monthly wages as the other people, but from their restiff [*sic*] and mutinous conduct he was obliged to put them in prison at Mauritius, but on the day he sailed from that place he paid them and they were liberated, that John Christian the black man was engaged at Batavia about the month of March last past for the passage home, he and nine more while the ship was at the Cape of Good Hope run away during their watch and took with them (as he has reason to suppose) one of the Ship's Boats because the Boat and men were missed at the same time, the Boat he thinks was found next day and the ten men were found two days later on board a Hamburg ship, they were all put in prison til the ship was nearly ready to sail when brought on board, he flogged John Christian because he had committed other crimes, that the articles for the ships company are regular according to the Customs of Denmark. The Deponent lastly solemnly

declares that to the best of his knowledge the ship Eenrom and cargo is the property of Conrad Fabritius & Wever aforesaid and that she truly was bound for Copenhagen.

(signed) C. C. Fronier

Sworn, etc, 28 January 1799

#### 4. *Deposition of John Christan (or Christian)*<sup>1</sup>

On the day of the date hereof personally appeared before me Francis Arbouin Vice Consul to the British Nation in the City of Lisbon John Christan a Black who voluntarily declared upon Oath actually taken on the Holy Evangelists that he was born in Goa in the East Indies and for seven years and upwards last he has lived at Batavia and been employed in going from Batavia to Holland in the Packets as Captain's Servant that he is a subject of the Crown of Portugal is married and his wife resides at Batavia that he had been a servant of the Dutch Commissary from the year 1791 until the year 1794 as nearly as he the deponent can recollect and from that time had been continually employed in the Dutch service in different ways til he entered for the ship Eenrom[.] The Dutch Commissary some time in March 1798 proposed to the deponent to enter in that ship saying that she was loading for him (the Commissary) was going to Copenhagen and would bring the deponent back again. The ship sailed immediately and on account of her having sprung her foremast and received other damages in a gale of wind they went into the Mauritius where the ship was unloaded and her cargo put on board another ship, he does not know whether any part of that cargo was sold, but he knows that some Coffee was brought on board from the shore and in some shore Boats in Bags, he believes near two hundred, the Eenrom laid alongside the ship into which she discharged her cargo until she took it out of her again. They sailed from the Mauritius and as the deponent understood were going to St. Helena but they went into the Cape of Good Hope where on account of having bad provisions himself and nine men more run away from her by means of a Flat bout on board of whom they entered but in the course of three days the Master of the Eenrom had them taken from that ship and put in prison in that number were three Englishmen whom the British Admiral at that port claimed while they were in prison and put them on board his ship. About six days before the Eenrom left the Cape of Good Hope the deponent and the other six men were taken from prison

<sup>1</sup>Years and dates are spelt out in full in the original.

and carried again to the Eenrom where no further notice was taken of their desertion and they again did their duty as usual, the next day the British Admiral sent an officer for the deponent who carried him to the Admiral where he was detained three days and examined concerning the ship Eenrom[.] his examination finished he was sent back to his ship where he was well received and again did his duty as usual but the day on which the Eenrom left the Cape of Good Hope and after they were a few leagues from the Harbour the Master called the Deponent on the quarter deck and after having told him in the presence of all the people that he the Deponent had been on board the English Admiral's ship to give information and to get the ship into trouble he would therefore punish him, upon which he ordered him to be seized up, and he was seized up to the main shrouds and with his jacket off received from two men at one time (who are now on board the Eenrom) to the best of his belief two hundred lashes, on being cut down he was ordered to do his duty again, but for three days he was not able. He first knew the ship when she was the property of the Dutch Commissary at Batavia[.] She was built at Rembang in Java and came to Batavia under Dutch Colours in 1793 or 1794 She went from thence to Tranquebar<sup>1</sup> under Dutch Colours and some time after came back with Danish Colours and Captain but with the same Dutch Officers and people as before. The ship was not then called the Eenrom but he does not recollect her name. The Dutch Commissary then loaded her with Coffee and Sugar, this was done the Deponent says while he was Servant to the Dutch Commissary and as well as he can recollect about the end of 1794 or 1795 she sailed for Copenhagen, all the officers and people as he believes except the Captain being Dutch[.] the Deponent says that the same ship came again to Batavia in the beginning of 1797 but he did not see in the ship any of the same people except the Black men the others were all Danes and he believes every one of them were now in the ship she was at that time unloaded and the cargo was put into the Dutch company's storehouses, the Dutch company sent another loading on board and the ship sailed for China she returned again to Batavia with Teas and Poreclane [*sic*] about the end of 1797 or the beginning of 1798 and the cargo she then brought was lodged in the same storehouses as that which she brought from Denmark. The Dutch Commissary loaded her again from the Company's Storehouses and the Deponent says that the Bags of Coffee now on board the Eenrom bear the mark of the Dutch Company. He first knew the present Master of the Eenrom then Chief Mate when that ship came last from Denmark, he was on board the Eenrom when she was detained by the British Frigate Brilliant on her passage from the Cape

<sup>1</sup>A Danish settlement on the Coromandel coast of India.

of Good Hope, the day she was detained the Deponent was brought on board His Majesty's Ship the Brilliant. He further declares that he knows nothing more of the ship and cargo than he has already deponed.

(signed) John Christian

Sworn, etc. 29 January 1799

### 5. *Deposition of John Porter*<sup>1</sup>

On the day and date hereof personally appeared before me Francis Arbouin Vice Consul of the British Nation in the City of Lisbon John Porter who voluntarily declared upon Oath actually taken on the holy Evangelists that he is a Native of Boston, in North America and that for these eight years last past he has been several Voyages from America to the East Indies and England, that his last Voyage was from London on board the Ganges (American ship) where he was Carpenters Mate, he went with that ship to Batavia and was on the voyage homeward when in consequence of having sprung a leak the ship Ganges put in to the Mauritius and was there detained and condemned as British property. The deponent for the first time there saw the ship Eenrom (about which he is now examined) and was entered for her by the supercargo, who told him that the ship was bound for Copenhagen. He saw in the prison ship at the Mauritius two Englishmen Adam Griffiths and Matthew Lawley with whom he had been shipmates. They told + him that they came from Batavia with the ship Eenrom (about which he is now examined) and + that the cargo was dutch property, and said they were put in prison because the supercargo was afraid they would give that information to any British ship of war they might meet, those men further told the deponent that they had given no cause for imprisonment, but that the supercargo, the Master of the ship Eenrom and the officers suspected that they the aforesaid Adam Griffiths and Andrew Lawley, know the cargo was shipped by Dutch merchants in Batavia, that the ship was ready to sail when the deponent went on board of her at the Mauritius, that he heard the men belonging to her say that she had coffee and sugar on board, but neither knows to whom, the ship or cargo belongs further than having heard it from different persons that the cargo belonged to dutch merchants that the ship Eenrom arrived at the Cape the last day of August one thousand seven hundred and ninety eight and while she lay there an information was given by three American seamen George Elenore, James Richardson and Denis

<sup>1</sup>Crosses indicate similar marginal annotations in the original.

Macarthy as well as by some foreigners who also belonged to the ship Eenrom that a certain quantity of coffee had been there sold and put into a shore boat, but where it went they could not say[,] that the men who gave this information but could not prove it, afterwards entered on board a British ship of war, that the day after the Eenrom left the Cape of Good Hope, the Master of her called all the ships company on deck and ordered John Christian (one of the black Mariners) to be tied to the capstan and two men with inch and a half rope flogged him over his shirt, that the said John Christian having broke loose from the capstan was by order of the Master tied up to the main shrouds and was very severely flogged the chief mate enquired of the deponent whether he had not heard John Christian say that the ship was dutch property to which the deponent answered in the affirmative and firmly believes that the said John Christian was flogged because he had, in the same manner as the other men already mentioned, said that he knew the cargo was dutch property. The deponent was on board the ship Eenrom when she was detained by the British Frigate Brilliant, did not know where she was steering at that time, many different reports were in the ship, the Deponent has no certain knowledge to whom the ship Eenrom or her cargo truly belongs, he from various reasons believes the cargo to be dutch, But was told when he entered for her that the ship was bound for Copenhagen, the morning after he was detained, he was put on board the Frigate.

(signed) John Porter

Sworn before me at Lisbon the thirty first day of January 1799

(signed) Frans. Arbouin, Vice Consul

## 6. *Deposition of François Racheminan*

... that he is a native of Malabar and for these several years last past has been different voyages in Danish ships from Batavia to Mauritius when the ship Eenrom (about which he is now examined) came into that port<sup>1</sup> and had been there for several months before her arrival, that while the supercargo of the ship Eenrom and the Master lived in the Hotel on shore he served them as hairdresser during which time he had frequent occasions to see and to speak with the Malays who were employed to carry the cargo on board the Eenrom and from them he learnt that the barge belonged to a Dutch merchant at Batavia, who employed them to take the Coffee and Sugar on board of the Eenrom the deponent further said that it was

<sup>1</sup>From the context, 'that port' must mean Batavia.

commonly reported by all the Malays that the Danish ship Eenrom (about which he is now examined) was taking in a cargo for a Dutch merchant whose name he does not know, that soon afterward the deponent embarked on board the American ship Ganges and went in her to the Mauritius [and there joined the Eenrom].

François Racheminan (mark)

Sworn, etc., 31 January 1799

7. *Replies to the Standing Interrogatories by J. A. Ponsaing*

Depositions of Witnesses had and taken at the House of Ann Palmer Widow bearing the sign of the George in Portsmouth in the County of Southampton the twenty sixth day of February in the year of Our Lord One thousand seven hundred and ninety nine and in the thirty ninth year of the reign of our Sovereign Lord George the Third by the Grace of God of Great Britain France and Ireland King Defender of the Faith and so forth upon the several Interrogatories hereto annexed<sup>1</sup> by virtue of His Majesty's Commission issuing out and under the Seal of Admiralty of England bearing date the Twentieth day of February one thousand seven hundred and ninety three To the Mayor of Portsmouth for the time being Harry Gibbs, James Primrose Maxwell, Richard Burwood, William Garrett, Harding Grant, Andrew Lindegren, Moses Hawkes and Daniel Guion Esquires jointly and severally directed before me the said James Primrose Maxwell upon the Oaths of the witnesses By the interpretation of George Frederick Stoll of Portsmouth aforesaid gentleman In the presence of Moses Greetham Junior Notary Publick.

Joseph Anton Ponsaing of Copenhagen in Denmark Aged about forty six years being sworn and examined deposeth as followeth

To the First Interrogatory this deponent saith that he was born at Deastein in Germany as he believes having been so informed by his Father who was a travelling Teacher of Languages but that he came in to Holstein as he was informed when very young That he has been employed in sailing

<sup>1</sup>Not reproduced in full here, the Interrogatories were a printed set of comprehensive questions, an example of which is Interrogatory 8: 'INTERROGATE. What Lading did the said ship carry at the Time of her first setting sail on her last Voyage, and what particular sort of Lading and Goods had she on board at the Time she was taken? In what Year, and in what Month, was the same put on board? Set forth the different Species of the Lading, and the quantities of each Sort.'

from Copenhagen as aforesaid to Bengal in the East Indies in two voyages during that time and in another voyage to Batavia in the East Indies and that he has lived at Copenhagen as aforesaid when the ship has been there That he is a subject of the King of Denmark and has never been a subject of another prince or state That he was admitted a Burgher or Freeman of Copenhagen aforesaid about five years ago at the time he became Master of a Ship That he paid about Fifty Rix Dollars for such Admission that he is a married man and his Wife and Family reside at Copenhagen aforesaid.

2nd. To the Second Interrogatory the Deponent saith That at the time of the taking and seizing of the ship and her Lading concerning which he is now examined he was present on board her and that she had not any Commission.<sup>1</sup>

3rd. To the Third Interrogatory this Deponent saith that the said ship and goods concerning which he is now examined were taken and seized in the Longitude of about fifteen and Latitude of between thirty eight and thirty nine degrees West from the meridian of London as nearly as he can recollect that he does not know but believes the reason for such seizure was that she came from Batavia That she was carried into Lisbon in Portugal and after remaining there for about three weeks she was brought to Portsmouth in Great Britain That the said ship sailed under Danish Colours and had not any other Colours on board That no resistance was made when the said ship was taken That she was taken by His Majesty's Ship Brilliant commanded by Captain Blackwood and that there was not any other ship of [two words indecipherable: 'War in'?] sight at the time of the Capture.

4th. To the Fourth Interrogatory this deponent saith that Carl Fronier was Master or Commander of the said ship taken That he has known him since the month of September one thousand seven hundred and ninety six That he this Deponent was appointed Master of the said Ship at that time by Messieurs Fabritius and Weyer Merchants at Copenhagen and took possession of her at that place which was delivered to him by them That he this Deponent sailed in her to Batavia and from thence to China as the Master of her and was there superceded in the Command by the present Master of her who had before been Chief Mate on board her and who was appointed by the Supercargo on board whose name is Michael Peter

<sup>1</sup>The Second Interrogatory is worded '... Had the Ship, concerning which you are now examined, any Commission? What, and from Whom?' It was presumably to establish whether the ship had any status as a government vessel.

Fabritius and by the other Mates on board her because he this Deponent was ill. That the present Master's fixed place of abode was Copenhagen aforesaid That he was born in Denmark is a Subject of the King of Denmark and is not married.

5th. To the Fifth Interrogatory the Deponent saith That the said ship is of the burthen of about One hundred and thirty five and a half Commercial Lasts that the number of Mariners Officers and all included was about Forty part of whom were Danes and part Black Men and Americans That the Danes came on board at Copenhagen aforesaid where they were shipped and hired by this Deponent in the month of November one thousand seven hundred and ninety six That the Second Mate who is a Hollander came on board at Batavia where he was shipped and hired by the present Master before they left that place the last time and that the rest came on board at the Isle of Mauritius and Batavia aforesaid where they were shipped and hired by the said Master.

6th. To the Sixth Interrogatory this Deponent saith That neither he this Deponent nor any other of the officers and mariners belonging to the said ship concerning which he is now examined had any part share or Interest in the said Ship or her Lading as he knows of That he this Deponent did not belong to the said ship at the time she was seized but was a Passenger on board her That he has known her since the month of September One thousand seven hundred and ninety six first saw her at Copenhagen and that she was Built on the coast of Java in the East Indies.

7th. To the Seventh Interrogatory this Deponent saith that the name of the said ship is the Eenrom That she was before called Prince Christian Frederick That she had a Passport or Sea Brief on board from the Magistrates at Copenhagen aforesaid That the said ship sailed from Copenhagen aforesaid in the month of September one thousand seven hundred and ninety six where she had taken onboard a Cargo or Lading of Wine, Beer, Tar, Iron Bars and various other Merchandize and proceeded therewith (after stopping at the port of Plymouth in Great Britain for twelve or thirteen days to get her caulked and at the Cape of Good Hope to take in Water) to Batavia in the East Indies and there delivered the said cargo which was disposed of by the Supercargo the said Michael Peter Fabritius who had purchased another Cargo there consisting of Pewter Bales of Cotton Pepper and some Spice That he this Deponent took the same on board the said Ship by the order of the said Supercargo proceeded therewith to Canton in China and there delivered the same which was also disposed of by the said Supercargo

who purchased another Cargo there consisting of Tea, Nankeen Porcelain and other China Wares and put the same on board the said ship That she returned therewith to Batavia aforesaid That during the stay of the said ship at Canton the Deponent being very ill was superceded in the command of the said ship by the present Master of her Carl Fronier That the last mentioned Cargo was landed at Batavia aforesaid under the orders of the aforesaid Supercargo That for the greater part of the time the said Ship lay at Batavia the last time this Deponent being in a very bad state of health went on shore for the recovery thereof and during his absence another Cargo or Lading was put on Board the said ship by the order of the said Supercargo consisting of Sugar and Coffee as he believes That she sailed from thence therewith some time in the month of March last and was bound therewith to Copenhagen aforesaid where the said voyage was to have ended as he believes That having met with a gale of wind or a Hurricane the said ship put into the Isle of Mauritius and her said Cargo or Lading was taken out and put on board another ship which was hired there for the purpose of depositing the Cargo until the said ship concerning which he is now examined was repaired That after she was so repaired the said Cargo or Lading was again taken on board her (except some Sugar the particular quantities of which he cannot recollect which had received Damage in the Hurricane and which was sold by Publick Auction there) That she sailed from the Isle of Mauritius about the beginning of the month of August last and put into the Cape of Good Hope but for what reason he does not know except for the purpose of obtaining Intelligence from Europe and was detained there by an Embargo on all ships for about two months That she sailed from thence in the beginning of the month of November last and proceeded on her voyage for Copenhagen aforesaid but a few days before she fell in with and was captured by His Britannick majesty's said ship Brilliant her course was altered by the said Supercargo and the present Master of her towards Lisbon but for what particular reason such course was altered for Lisbon he does not know unless it was for the purpose of staying the winter there as the said Ship could not have immediately proceeded to Copenhagen without great risque of her safety.

8th. To the eighth Interrogatory this Deponent saith That the Lading the said ship carried at the time of her first setting sail from Batavia aforesaid was the same which she had on board at the time she was taken (except the damaged sugar sold at the Isle of Mauritius as before mentioned) and consisted of Sugar and Coffee as he believes the particular quantities of which he does not know which was all put on board at Batavia aforesaid

in the months of January and February One thousand seven hundred and ninety eight as he believes.

9th. To the ninth Interrogatory this Deponent saith that Conrad Fabritius and Weijer were the owners of the said Ship concerning which he is now examined at the time when she was seized as he believes because they are stated to be so in the Certificates and other Papers respecting her and because they appointed this Deponent to the command of her That the said Owners are Danes by birth as he believes and reside with their Families at Copenhagen aforesaid and are subjects of the King of Denmark.

10th. To the tenth Interrogatory this Deponent saith That he does not know whether any Bill of Sale was made to the aforesaid owners and cannot therefore to this Interrogatory depose.

11th. To the eleventh Interrogatory this Deponent saith that the whole of the said Lading was put on board at Batavia aforesaid at the times before mentioned.

12th. To the twelfth Interrogatory this Deponent saith that the said Supercargo Michael Peter Fabritius was the Lader of the said Goods and that he believes the said Conrad Fabritius and Weijer are the Owners and Consignees thereof because it was stated in this Deponent's Instructions that the said Supercargo was to dispose of the said Cargo taken on board at Copenhagen and with the produce thereof to purchase other Cargoes for their use That they are Danes and live and carry on their business or Trade at Copenhagen aforesaid as before mentioned and that he can take upon himself to swear that he believes that at the time of the Lading the Cargo and at this present time and also if the said Goods shall be restored that the goods did do and will belong to the above mentioned persons and none other.

13th. To the thirteenth Interrogatory this Deponent saith that having been superceded in the command of the said ship by the present Master of her on account of Illness before the said last mentioned Goods were put on board at Batavia aforesaid and not being present at the time the Bills of Lading were signed he cannot further to this Interrogatory depose.

14th. To the fourteenth Interrogatory this Deponent saith That there are not in Great Britain any bills of Lading Invoices Letters or Instruments relative to the said ship and Goods concerning which he is now examined

as he knows of except those which were delivered up to the Captors at the time she was seized.

15th. To the fifteenth Interrogatory this Deponent saith That there was not any Charter Party signed for the Voyage in which the ship concerning which he is now examined was seized and taken as he knows of.

16th. To the sixteenth Interrogatory this Deponent saith That he does not know what Papers Bills of Lading Letters or other Writings were on board this ship at the time she took her Departure from Batavia before her being seized but that none which were then on board were afterwards Burnt Torn thrown overboard destroyed or cancelled concealed or attempted to be concealed as he knows of but were all delivered up to the Captors as he believes.

17th. To the seventeenth Interrogatory this Deponent saith That the said Ship concerning which he is now examined has never been seized as Prize or condemned as such.

18th. To the eighteenth Interrogatory this Deponent saith That he hath not sustained any Loss by the seizing and taking the said ship concerning which he is now examined.

19th. To the nineteenth Interrogatory this Deponent saith That the said Ship and Goods are insured as he believes but at what premium and when or by what persons or in what country such Insurance was made he does not know but has heard it was made in London.

20th. To the twentieth Interrogatory this Deponent saith That in case the said ship had arrived at her destined port the Cargo on being unladen would have immediately become the property of the before mentioned Owners as he believes.

21st. To the twenty first Interrogatory this Deponent saith That the said Lading is of the growth produce and manufacture of the Isle of Java as he believes.

22nd. To the twenty second Interrogatory this Deponent saith That the whole of the said Lading was taken from the shore at Batavia aforesaid and brought on board the said ship in Boats as she lay in the Roadstead there in the months of January and February one thousand nine hundred and seventy eight as he believes.

23rd. To the twenty third Interrogatory this Deponent saith That there are not in any country besides Great Britain or on board any other ship or vessel any Bills of Lading Invoices Letters Instruments Papers or Documents relative to the said Ship or Cargo that he knows of.

24th. To the twenty fourth Interrogatory this Deponent saith That there were not any Papers delivered out of the said ship and carried away in any manner whatsoever as he knows of before her seizure.

25th. To the twenty fifth Interrogatory this Deponent saith that Bulk was broken during the Voyage at the Isle of Mauritius and the Cargo taken out of the said ship for the purpose of getting her repaired and a quantity of damaged sugar sold there as before mentioned and that before her capture she was boarded by a British Privateer the crew of which opened her fore hatchway but did not take out any of her Cargo.

26th. To the twenty sixth Interrogatory this Deponent saith That there were four Passengers on board the said ship who were not secreted at the time of the Capture who were the said Michael Peter Fabritius who is the son of the said Conrad Fabritius and was appointed Supercargo by the Owners of the said Ship and came on board at Copenhagen aforesaid has continued in that capacity during the whole of the Voyage and was finally destined to Copenhagen aforesaid but went on shore at Lisbon after the Capture where he remained, Mr Kier who was a Supercargo on board an American vessel detained and condemned at the Isle of Mauritius and who was a Native of Great Britain and came on board the said Ship at that place and was finally destined to England as he believes on his own private affairs Mr Lorensen who was Commander of a Danish Ship detained at the Cape of Good Hope and who was a Norway man and [blank] Corensbeck<sup>1</sup> a Native of the Cape of Good Hope both of whom came on board at that place and were destined to Copenhagen on their private Affairs but also went ashore at Lisbon That neither of the three last mentioned passengers had any property or concern or Authority directly or indirectly regarding the said Ship and Cargo That there were not any Officers Soldiers [one word illegible] secreted on board nor any of His Britannick Majesty's subjects on board, except the said Mr Kier nor secreted or confined at the time of the Capture.

27th. To the twenty seventh Interrogatory this Deponent saith That all the Passports Sea Briefs Invoices and Papers which were found on board were

<sup>1</sup>Variouly spelt above at [2], [3].

entirely free and fair and not false or colourable as he believes That he does not know any matter or circumstances to affect their Credits That the said Passport or Sea Briefs was obtained by the Broker of the said Ship (whose name he does not recollect) at Copenhagen aforesaid for this ship only upon the Oath of this Deponent and the Owners of her which was to last until her return to Copenhagen that he does not know what duty or fee was paid for the same That the said passport has not been renewed since this Deponent belonged to her That other ships were in the Roads of Copenhagen when the said Passport was obtained That the Passengers had Let Passes or Letters of Safe Conduct as he believes but that he cannot further to this Interrogatory depose.

28th. To the twenty eighth Interrogatory this Deponent saith That he signed the Bills of Lading of the outward bound Cargo one of which was on board the ship at the time this Deponent was superceded in the Command but that he does not know what has since become thereof.

29th. To the twenty ninth Interrogatory this Deponent saith That the said Ship was steering her course at the time of her being first pursued and taken towards Lisbon aforesaid That upon observing the said ship Brilliant haul up towards the said Ship concerning which he is now examined the course of the latter was altered to meet her That the said ship was not sailing wide of her due course to Copenhagen except that she had altered her course towards Lisbon aforesaid a few days before she was seized and that her Course was not altered to any other Port or Place than those before mentioned.

30th. To the thirtieth Interrogatory this deponent saith That he does verily believe if the said Ship shall be restored she will belong to the before mentioned owners of her and to none others and that he cannot further to this Interrogatory depone.

31st. To the thirty first Interrogatory this Deponent saith That there were two two pound guns mounted on board the said Ship That she had six Carronades between decks dismounted That there [were] about a dozen Musquets Six or Eight Pistols about a Dozen Cutlasses and some Gunpowder belonging to her That she was so Armed against Pirates in the East Indies That there were not any other Guns Arms or Ammunition or any other warlike or Naval Stores on board her nor any such thrown overboard to prevent suspicion at the time of the Capture or concealed on board under the name of Merchandize or any other colourable appellation in the Ship's Papers.

32nd. To the thirty second Interrogatory this Deponent saith that he hath in his answers to the foregoing Interrogatories set forth the whole which he knows or believes according to the best of his knowledge and belief regarding the real and true property and destination of the said Ship and her Lading concerning which he is now examined at the time of the Capture.

The same Witness examined to the additional Interrogatories

1st. To the first additional Interrogatory this deponent saith That the said Ship on the Voyage in which she was captured or on or during any former voyage did not sail under the Convoy of any Ship or Ships of War or other armed Vessel or Vessels.

2nd. To the second additional Interrogatory this Deponent saith That the said Ship during the voyage in which she was captured did not sail or attempt to enter any port under Blockade by the arms and Forces of any of the Belligerent Powers.

Sworn before me (signed) Joseph Anton Ponsaing  
(signed) J. P. Maxwell in the presence of (signed) Ms. Greetham  
Junr., Notary Public  
By the Interpretation of (signed) G. F. Stoll

#### 8. *Judgment in the case of The Eenrom, Fronier Master*

21 May, 1799

This was a case of a ship and cargo taken on a voyage from *Batavia* to *Copenhagen*, December 27, 1798, by His Majesty's Ship the *Brilliant*.

#### JUDGMENT.

Sir *William Scott*. – In this case the ship is claimed as the entire property of Messieurs *Fabritius* and *Wever* of *Copenhagen*; and half the cargo also is claimed as belonging to them, by Mr. *Fabritius* the son, being employed as supercargo on board this vessel.

The Court directed that this gentleman should give some account of the property of the remainder of the cargo; it being claimed 'as the undivided property of *Fabritius* and others', he was called upon to specify who were the copartners: The Court was more particularly induced to make this order, by the special application which had been made on the

part of the claimant to allow this very gentleman to be examined, as a person who was acquainted with every particle of the transaction, and who could give the Court the most satisfactory information upon every circumstance belonging to it. To the surprise of the Court this gentleman has now said in his affidavit, 'that he cannot set forth the specific interests, except as hereafter mentioned, as he was sick and confined at *Batavia*, and obliged to entrust the actual shipment of the cargo to Mr. *Inglehart*, with whom he had not come to any final settlement before he left that place'. It is worthy of notice that, although Mr. *Inglehart* was the actual shipper, his name does not appear in any one of the ship's papers, although it has happened to peep out since in several other cases. It is, I think, on the face of this excuse, an extraordinary circumstance, that a person employed as supercargo in a foreign country, (who must necessarily be required to give an account of all his transactions to his principals), falling from illness, under the necessity of executing his trust by an agent, should not, immediately on his recovery, put himself in possession of every thing that had been done for him by his substituted agent during his confinement; this is surely no more than what every agent, in such a situation, would naturally have done: Mr *Fabritius* says 'he did not' – 'but knowing that the funds arising from the outward cargo of this vessel, and from the profits of her voyage to *China*, as far as they were applied to the present cargo, were not equal to more than a moiety: and also learning in *England* that Messrs. *Fabritius* and *Wever* had caused insurance to be made here to the amount of about half this cargo, he is led to believe that not more than a moiety belongs to these gentlemen'. The Court cannot forget that in a very late case, the *Denmark*, this very outward cargo of the *Eenrom* was represented as overflowing the capacity of her return, and as being employed in purchasing a large ship over and above that returned cargo. It now however appears that it was not equal to a moiety of the returned cargo; the other moiety, Mr. *Fabritius* says, 'he supposes to have belonged to Mr. *Inglehart*, or some person for whom he acted:' he says, indeed, that Mr. *Inglehart* told him it belonged to him; but whether in his own right or as agent he cannot say: 'but from hearing on his return to *England* that *Marshall Blucker* had caused an insurance to be made here on a part distinct from Messrs. *Fabritius* and *Wever*, he is induced to think that some part belongs to him'.

This leads me to dispose of this part of the case, the interest of Mr. *Blucker*, first, Mr. *Cowie*<sup>1</sup> states in his affidavit 'that he received orders (he does not say from whom) in *May* 1798 to insure for *Marshall Blucker*,

<sup>1</sup>It is clear from other papers in HCA 42/217, not reproduced, that *Cowie* was *Marshall Blucker's* attorney in *England*.

in the *Eenrom*, one thousand two hundred pounds on ship and cargo; and that he believes him to be interested to that amount:’ it appeared to the Court to be an extraordinary circumstance that the insurance should be made in these terms, on ship and cargo, for a person who was not suggested to have any interest in the ship; and the explanation was, that *Marshall Blucker* not being a mercantile man, might have fallen into this error inadvertently: I should rather have thought that such an expression, deviating from common speech, was more like the phrase of a person speaking in technical language, than of a person ignorant of trade, and writing simply from his own apprehension of his own concerns; and more especially since I learn, on reference to the merchants, that it is mercantile language, and that such an insurance, though including ship and cargo, is allowed to apply solely to an interest of that amount in the cargo, if the party had an interest in the cargo to that amount, and no interest in the ship. Mr. *Cowie* states farther, ‘that he has written for instructions’, but does not say when. This ship was brought in, in *January* 1799: as a careful and diligent agent he must have taken the first opportunity of giving intelligence of the capture: But it is not said what answer was received, nor is it even said that Mr. *Cowie* expects directions to claim; no paper on board expresses the name of Mr. *Blucker*, and he is perfectly quiescent and, as far as appears, ignorant of the matter; therefore on the whole I think this is not such a claim as I can admit under the circumstances in which it is introduced: if *Marshall Blucker* has any real interest in the cargo, he may still claim it elsewhere, in the Court of Appeal.<sup>1</sup>

\* \* \*

[one paragraph, rejecting a claim founded on bottomry bonds alleged to have been signed in Mauritius, omitted]

\* \* \*

I come now to the consideration of the ship and cargo; or rather, I shall invert the order, and consider the cargo first: The outward cargo of this voyage consisted of tar, sheathing copper, sail cloth, and other articles, which by treaty this country and *Denmark* are expressly forbidden to carry to the enemy of the other; it sets out therefore with a violation of public treaties, and of the private law of *Denmark*; because every treaty is a part of the private law of the country which has entered into that treaty, and is

<sup>1</sup>He did (see [14]), but not, it appears, with any success as the Commissioners for Appeals in Prize Causes seem to have upheld Scott’s judgment *in toto*.

as binding on the subjects as any part of their municipal laws; the clearance was general to the *East Indies*, though in some papers a destination to *Fredericksnagore* is held out: with respect to these general clearances to the *East* or *West Indies*, I cannot say that they are absolutely and necessarily illegal, although they are certainly inconvenient to all Parties, by throwing a great weight of uncertainty on the nature of the intended voyage: if neutral governments permit these indefinite clearances which seem to allow a destination to the ports of a belligerent, (if such belligerent has any ports in the *East* or *West Indies*,) it seems proper at least that the nature of the cargo should correspond, and care should be taken that the cargo should be such as their subjects are allowed to carry into an enemy's port; there should be an affidavit, as in voyages to an enemy's port, that the cargo contains no prohibited goods: for without some precaution of this kind great frauds may be committed against the public treaties of the country, and the country may be involved in the consequences of such frauds. There seems to have been no such security taken in this case, and therefore I am inclined to think that there must have been some understanding on this subject at *Copenhagen*, that the voyage was to be to their own ports, or to neutral ports only; for it is not to be imagined that such a general clearance could have been obtained for articles of this description, being understood to have a liberty of going to an enemy's port; such a thing cannot be supposed, without imputing to the *Danish* government, such a connivance at the irregular and illegal conduct of its subjects, as I am in no degree disposed to surmise. The fact, however, is asserted to be, that this vessel left *Copenhagen* with these noxious articles on board, and with full liberty of going to any port; that there was any other destination than to *Batavia* is not suggested by any one circumstance in the cause, therefore we may describe it to have been a voyage not contingent, nor left optional, but clear and certain, in direct violation of public treaties, and of the law of *Denmark*, founded on those treaties.<sup>1</sup>

These are circumstances *in limine*, and this is the manner in which the voyage sets out; the next circumstance on which I shall observe is, that the management of this whole affair seems to have been committed to Mr. *Fabritius jun.* and that he acted with unlimited controul, although he is scarcely mentioned in the papers; only in a corner of the instructions given to the master, who was to conduct every thing; but in a note '*Ponsaing and the Supercargo* are directed to dispose of the cargo and to invest

<sup>1</sup>Scott seems to have been making a political point in this paragraph. The outward voyage was too far in the past to be adjudicated at this stage, but Scott seems to have thought it worth warning the Danish government (who were sure, at this sensitive time, to read his judgment with care) against laxity in granting clearances of contraband goods to unspecified destinations.

another in the best manner they might be able:’ this is the only manner in which Mr. *Fabritius* is mentioned, in a character merely *assistendo*, although he now appears to have been intrusted with unlimited power over the whole business.

The instructions farther direct, ‘that if the cargo should not be sufficient for the returned voyage, other goods might be taken on freight, with a condition that they should be consigned to Messieurs *Fabritius* and *Wever*:’ This is not like an authority to buy a cargo in undivided moieties for these gentleman, and other persons; there are no directions for a partnership: when I see how these instructions are executed and by whom, in a manner totally different from what they purport, I am strongly induced to suspect that they are merely colourable instructions, and that the real history of this transaction is connected with previous arrangements in *Batavia* between Messieurs *Fabritius* and *Wever*, and Mr. *Inglehart*, the person actually employed in putting this cargo on board.

The cargo is put on board by him, and it is a very material question, on which the fate of the cargo, and of the ship likewise may depend; Whether it was the intention of the supercargo, in this part of the transaction, to mislead the *British* courts of justice, and *British* cruizers, as to the property of the cargo? For I am of opinion, that if such an intention can be proved in the agent, let the interests of his employers in *Denmark* be what they may, the[y] must be affected by his conduct, and the consequence will attach on them to confiscate their property so engaged. This is no ordinary supercargo, he is the son of his employer, and appears to have been delegated with greater powers than supercargoes usually enjoy; his conduct must in point of law and conscience, and under the most lenient considerations of equity, be held to bind his principal with peculiar force. In strict law every supercargo will bind his employer; and although where law is administered with great indulgence, cases may arise in which the Court will not implicate the owner; as in some cases where supercargoes have appeared, taking in small parcels of goods in contradiction to the orders of their employers, the Court has thought it hard to involve the interests of the owners, though perhaps strictly responsible; yet this is not a case entitled to any such favourable treatment; this is not the case of a small portion of a cargo taken in from false compassion to others, or from corrupt views of private interest; the fraud, if any, in this instance, must be that of a deliberate interfering in the war, to mark and withdraw from the rights of a belligerent, the property of his enemy, to the amount of one half of a most valuable cargo. It is not the case of an ordinary supercargo; the person delegated is intrusted with the fullest powers, and if he has abused his powers so largely conferred, it is to him that the owners must look for redress.

The regular penalty of such a proceeding must be confiscation; for it is a rule of this Court, which I shall ever hold, till I am better instructed by a superior Court, that if a neutral will weave a web of fraud of this sort, this Court will not take the trouble of picking out the threads for him, in order to distinguish the sound from the unsound; if he is detected in fraud he will be involved *in toto*.— A neutral surely cannot be permitted to say, ‘I have endeavoured to protect the whole, but this part is *really* my property, take the rest and let me go with my own.’ If he will engage in fraudulent concerns with other persons, they must all stand or fall together. Let us see then if there is not reason, not only to suspect, but *to conclude*, that there was a design to represent the cargo, which appears to have belonged in great part to *Inglehart the Dutchman*, as the entire property of *Fabritius* and *Wever*.— In the first place Mr. *Inglehart* was the shipper, yet his name is not once mentioned in the papers; in no one place does his name occur, which cannot be an accidental omission, since it is according to the most ordinary course of business that the name of the shipper should be specified; I must therefore consider this supposition, as a studied contrivance, to withdraw from the notice of this Court, every connection that Mr. *Inglehart* has had with this transaction. The master and the mate describe *Fabritius* and *Wever* as the entire proprietors, and Mr. *Fabritius* jun. as the shipper; they were examined as soon as the ship was brought in; and, as we may presume, before they were apprised of the existence of other papers; they agree with the formal papers in keeping out of sight the name of *Inglehart*, and never once make mention of him: This is an extraordinary circumstance, for the master is in this case not a common carrier-master; he is a confidential manager of the business, according to the instructions, yet so much is he kept in the dark, or keeps himself so, that he represents *Fabritius* and *Wever* as the entire proprietors of the cargo. It is said, as an excuse for this man,<sup>1</sup> that he was affected with an almost total derangement of mind, whilst he was at *Batavia*, owing to the climate, and that he came home perfectly ignorant of the transaction; but there is not mention of this malady in his deposition, nor are there any signs of it; he gives a cool and rational recital of facts, and shews at least a *method in his madness*, in every part of his conduct that presents itself to our view; he was appointed joint agent with *Fabritius*, yet he was left under the delusion that the whole cargo, only half of which is now claimed, belonged to Messrs. *Fabritius* and *Wever*.— If he was deceived, it serves to establish the imposition on the part of others;— if he joined in the deceit, it still farther fortifies the suspicion of a general combination

<sup>1</sup>From the context, it appears Scott was referring at this point to Ponsaing the former master of the *Eenrom*. If so, he took almost no account of Ponsaing’s replies to the 7th and 13th Interrogatories, see [7] above.

of fraud. Mr. *Fronier*, who was the master substituted in his place for the returned voyage, lies under the same mistake; he describes the cargo as the entire property of *Fabritius* and *Wever*. I do not say that this Court will lay down a rule so harsh as to require that every carrier-master should know the property of every part of her cargo; yet in time of war it cannot be unknown to neutrals that the master is expected to speak to the property of his cargo; more especially in a case like this, where the property is as great as one half, and where the master is a confidential person, and where there is a son of his employer in the character of a supercargo on board; total ignorance can scarcely happen to such a matter; and where it is pretended, it strongly rivets on the mind of the Court a suspicion (by which I always mean a legal suspicion) that there is something behind, which it is for the interest of the parties to conceal. But the matter does not end here: there is no mention of any distinction of property in the papers: The invoice describes the whole cargo as the property of *Fabritius* and *Wever*; and this paper is signed, not by the master but by the supercargo. It is said that the invoice is not a paper of consequence, that the bill of lading is the document to which reference is usually made; but this is both: it is a bill of lading as well as an invoice – then how came this on board? It is said that Mr. *Fabritius* was ill, that the lading was conducted for him, and that he signed the paper without attention to its contents: how can I accede to such an explanation? Is it credible that a man, entrusted with the management of so large a concern, should fall into such a misapprehension as to sign a solemn paper asserting the whole property to belong to his employer, when he well knew that it did not? or can it be believed that on his recovery he should not have made himself acquainted with every thing that had been done for him? to act otherwise would be so monstrous, that no pretence of illness is sufficient to apologise for it.

But it is said Mr. *Fabritius* has, since his arrival in *England*, disclosed the truth and given in his claim for only one half, and much credit is assumed for this instance of fair and ingenuous conduct. – Allowing all the merit that is due to such a recantation, I do not know that it can be of any avail to protect this case from the penalties attaching on the former part of the transaction; for if the Court is satisfied that the intention was to hold out to *British* cruisers a *noli me tangere* as to the whole on an appearance of its being *Danish* property – although a *locus penitentiae* is to be allowed to all men, I cannot but think that it comes a little too late, under the circumstances of the present case: – Shall a deceit be allowed during the whole of such a voyage; and after it has had a great part of its effect in deceiving our cruisers, shall it be done away by this late confession? If the representation of the papers, and the master, and the substituted master, had been believed, the whole of this cargo would have

been long ago safe in *Copenhagen* or *America*. But what is more material, it is to be remembered that, before the present claim was given, a disclosure of evidence had been obtained from the papers of some other cases; in the *Nancy*, which was a ship under the same parties, it had come to light that Mr. *Inglehart* was concerned in the cargo of the *Eenrom*, and in the exact proportion which squares with Mr. *Fabritius's* amended claim; this circumstance very much detracts from the merit of the confession; there being every reason to presume that no such claim would have been given if the evidence already exhibited in that case had not shewn that a claim for the whole would be completely falsified – if so, the purpose of fraud is abandoned, merely because it can no longer be maintained.

Is the Court then to believe that Mr. *Fabritius* came into this country with an intention of making this disclosure, and of making the claim as it now stands? or that he meant to hold out the property to be as the formal papers represent? When I look to the other steps leading to this fraud, when I find all the papers on board in this tenor, and see the master and the displaced master using the same language in their depositions, even after their arrival in this country, it would be a strain of charity, much beyond what is consistent with justice, if I did not say that it was an intention, carried into effect, to cover the whole cargo, as the property of *Fabritius* and *Wever*, by persons knowing the contrary, and whose acts will legally affect their employers: What in my judgment decisively proves that such was the determined purpose of the parties is, the fact that appears, that this ship was first carried into *Lisbon*, and that an inquiry was there instituted respecting the property of this ship and cargo. It has been pressed upon the Court, by the captors, to receive the depositions there made by Mr. *Fabritius* and others; but the Court has declined to receive those depositions, as irregularly taken, and therefore cannot advert to them. How Mr. *Fabritius* swore upon that occasion, with respect to this cargo, I cannot say; but I cannot think it otherwise than highly probable, that he represented the property as entirely belonging to the house of *Fabritius* and *Wever*; because I think it impossible that after such an inquiry had been pursued at *Lisbon*, the master and the displaced master should have continued in the error (if it is a mere error) that has led them to depose here to the same effect; unless he had so held it out, as well in those depositions, as in the conversations which he must since have had with them, prior to their examinations here. And when I recollect his extreme eagerness to be examined here upon his arrival, I cannot but think that he was at that time fully prepared to support upon oath the same representation; and that nothing but the subsequent information he received, that the secrets had already been betrayed by the papers of the *Nancy*, prevented him from so doing.

With respect to the ship, Is the property in that so proved as to support a claim for restitution without farther proof? If that could be maintained, I might perhaps allow it to be distinguished from the other part of the case. But if farther proof is necessary, it comes to this question, Are persons so convicted of an attempt to impose on the Court entitled to the privilege of giving farther proof? The ship was built at *Batavia*, and has been constantly trading from *Batavia*. It must have been the property of *Dutchmen*; and therefore under any circumstances a bill of sale would be necessary; and under the particular circumstances which I have pointed out, a bill of sale could hardly be deemed sufficient. But a thicker cloud is raised over this case, from what appears from a paper in the *Nancy*, which is signed by *Inglehart*, and states – ‘I shall accompany this with the accounts of the *Eenrom*, of which Messrs. *Fabritius* and *Wever* are sharers.’ It is said that this applies to the cargo only; it may be so; it is a possible explanation; but how can this be proved? It can only be by farther proof. Again: There are many passages in which Mr. *Inglehart* seems to assume great authority over the conduct of the vessel. It is said that this was in consequence of a charter-party, by which he had chartered the vessel: It may be so; but this is a matter of explanation only, and of farther proof; as it is left at present on the face of it, very ambiguous. There being the necessity of farther proof, have the parties placed themselves in a situation in which they are entitled to a privilege of this kind? It is a rule that I shall uniformly adhere to, till I am better instructed, that where a party has been convicted of an attempt to impose on the Court in the same transaction, the privilege of farther proof shall be denied him, as a privilege which is justly forfeited by deception and fraud; I shall therefore pronounce both the ship and cargo subject to condemnation.

### 9. *Paper invoked from the case of The Nancy (Knudsen)*<sup>1</sup>

From Englehart, Batavia, to Mr Peter Servatius, Groningen, 16 April 1798

\* \* \*

I accompany this with a further account applying to the ship Eenrom [original underlined by another hand, almost certainly the Appeal Court] with a balance against us of Rix dollars  
+ 2346:14 1173:22 Rd. of which Messrs Fabritius and Wever share in  
and I request

<sup>1</sup>Original shows marginal entries thus + + + as shown.

+ that this may be carried to my credit in account

\* \* \*

Having drawn so much money in Bills contrary to my expectation it may turn out that the funds + of the Eenrom Denmark and Graf Bernstorff Captain Belmer will not suffice after the payment of the drafts to load the above mentioned ships. The first with a Dutch cargo and the two last with articles of Equipment and Specie in which case I dispense with articles of Equipment so far as they are not bought And only request that there may be sent by every ship Ten or fifteen thousand Rix dollars in Gold, Dutch ducats, and Spanish dollars.

**10.** *Paper concerning the supersession of Captain Ponsaing*<sup>1</sup>

On the 8th of this month of November [1797] at 4 o'clock in the morning the most unpleasant circumstance happened to me that Capt Ponsaing commanding the ship Eenrom entrusted to him by the house of Conrad Fabritius & Wever at Copenhagen in which I am appointed supercargo with respect to the conducting of the affairs of trade: in a fit of insanity cut his throat with a cutlass and as that would not answer the purpose with a razor afterwards, whereby a windpipe was injured. Luckily the wound was declared not mortal if no unfortunate circumstance intervened. This puts me the undersigned under the necessity of requesting the doctor's certificate and opinion whether ... I might entrust him with the Command of the ship and cargo.

M. P. Fabritius  
Canton, 11 November 1797

**11.** *Doctor's Certificate regarding Captain Ponsaing*<sup>2</sup>

I hereby certify that ... he is not capable of transacting the business he has to do as Captain and Commander of a ship.

Wm. Dietrich  
11 November 1797

<sup>1</sup>The paper is a translation from the Danish.

<sup>2</sup>The paper is a translation from the Danish.

[The ship's Council (Chief Mate, Second Mate, Boatswain and Carpenter), in a separate document also dated 11 November 1797 and included in the papers in HCA 42/217, endorsed the view that 'a man who commits violence on himself must have lost his senses and therefore cannot be entrusted with so important an office'.]

## 12. *Instructions to Christian Carl Fronier*<sup>1</sup>

Instructions for Christian Carl Fronier Commander of the ship Eenrom belonging to Messrs. C. Fabritius and Wever at Copenhagen.

As another instance of mental derangement has taken place in Captain Ponsaing, which at times unfits him for the command, therefore the command of the ship Eenrom is committed to Christian Carl Fronier during the return voyage to Copenhagen, who received the ship in the condition in which she is now laying in Batavia Road – is to have the superintending care, as well of what relates to the requisite expenditure for the ship, the keeping her in a proper order for Navigating as also concerning the Provisions for the Crew, to the end that without loss of time she may be prepared to continue her voyage to Copenhagen.

Dated 27 February 1798

[No signature is apparent on the translation]

## 13. *Affidavit of M. P. Fabritius to the Appeal Court*

23 May 1799<sup>2</sup>

Appeared personally Michael Peter Fabritius supercargo of the ship Eenrom and claimant on this cause and by interpretation in the Danish language of Christopher Sunding<sup>3</sup> of London Notary Publick made oath as follows that in about three weeks after the capture of the said ship Eenrom by His Majesty's Ship Brilliant, Henry Blackwood Esq Commander, she arrived in the harbour of Lisbon but that no communication was allowed with the ship (except that the Danish Minister at Lisbon Mr Warnsted came once on board the ship on a visit to the deponent who was well acquainted with him but that he was not suffered

<sup>1</sup>The paper is a translation from the Danish.

<sup>2</sup>Note the date, two days after Scott's judgment was given. It is clear that Fabritius was determined to carry his appeal forward and to cite his alleged ill-treatment in Lisbon in support.

<sup>3</sup>?Sundius in signature at foot.

to remain on board but ordered immediately on shore, nor was this deponent suffered to go on shore for seven days or more after[]], and that during the whole of this time this deponent was obliged to remain on board the ship, that this deponent was then informed he should be allowed to go on shore but that instead of being carried on shore the deponent was taken on board the Brilliant and compelled to remain there the whole night notwithstanding he desired that he might at least return to the Eenrom as he was no Prisoner of War and that on the following morning this deponent was carried on shore by the said Captain Blackwood who compelled the deponent to go to the house of Arbouin the English Vice Consul and there to undergo an examination by him in the English language in the presence for about half an hour of the said Captain Blackwood that this deponent was not then sufficiently acquainted with the English language for such examination and desired to have an interpreter from the Danish Consulate but that the same was refused nor had he any interpreter – that after the said Captain Blackwood was gone the said Mr Arbouin continued to interrogate this deponent and that having finished the examination he read it cursorily over to the deponent who was required to sign the same and which he did under an apprehension that unless he so submitted he would be carried again on board the frigate and this deponent saith that several of the officers of the Eenrom were returned to the frigate until such time as their depositions taken like this deponent's were finished and he further saith that eight or ten days after his said examination on his coming to the house of the English Vice Consul the deponent saw his deposition lying open on the table when looking upon it he observed several alterations therein since the deponent had signed the same and which alterations he pointed out to the said Vice Consul who replied that they had been made under the direction of Captain Blackwood and this deponent further saith that at another time he was present in the house of the said Mr Arbouin after the depositions of the officers and crew of the Eenrom had been taken and saw the Purser of the Brilliant reading over the same with a pen in his hand and the deponent verily believes that the said Purser made some alterations therein.<sup>1</sup>

(signed) M. P. Fabritius  
C. Sundius, Not. Pub.

<sup>1</sup>No alterations of substance can be seen in the relevant papers in HCA 42/217.

**14. *Affidavit of Marshal Blucker***

In His Majesty's High Court of Appeal for Prizes

Eenrom ... C. C. Fronier Master in lieu of J. A. Ponsaing formerly Master

15 May 1800

Appeared personally Conrad Blucker Esquire of Copenhagen heretofore Chamberlain and Marshall Chef de Cour to Her late Majesty the Queen Dowager of Denmark and made oath that he is a subject of His Majesty the King of Denmark and resides with his wife and family in Copenhagen, but is now in London having on the sixth day of October last left Copenhagen for the express and sole purpose of attending to his property or interest in the above ship Eenrom and cargo, which as he was informed were on the twenty fourth of May preceding condemned by the High Court of Admiralty of England as enemies property or otherwise liable to confiscation, and which Interest or property arises in manner as set forth in the following deposition (to wit) that in the month of May 1794 the deponent married Mannone Abbestic one of the two daughters and co-heiresses of the late Major General Herman Abbestic who for thirty six years was Governor General of the Danish settlements in the East Indies and resided at Tranquebar, from whence he returned home to Copenhagen in the month of September 1789 and died there about the end of the month of December 1796. That Chamberlain von Qualen of the household of his present Majesty the King of Denmark married Frances Abbestic the other daughter of the said General Abbestic, and the deponent and the said Chamberlain von Qualen in right of their said wives became intitled to the estate and property of their said father in law on his decease ...

\* \* \*

... at the time of his death there was due from [his bankers] Fabritius & Wever to the estate of the said General Abbestic 15,100 Rix dollars being equal to about 3,020 pounds sterling ... they declared that they had with the Major General's consent employed his money in their ship Eenrom and her cargo on a voyage from Copenhagen to the East Indies ...

[The deposition then goes into considerable detail of the investment and insurance thereon, and the fact that Marshal Blucker had taken on his brother-in-law's share.]

\* \* \*

The claim of Conrad Blucker Esq. of Copenhagen ... the true and lawful proprietor of a certain share and interest in the said ship *Eenrom* or her cargo or both to the extent of a value of 3279.10 sterling as set forth in the affidavit hereto annexed ... as the sole property of a Danish subject and for all such losses costs charges Damages and Expences as have arisen or shall or may arise by reason of the capture and Detention of the same.

(signed) F. Laurence<sup>1</sup>

C. Blucker

### 15. *Prize Account for the ship Eenrom*

Ship *Eenrom* taken by the *Brilliant* Capt Henry Blackwood on the 28th May<sup>2</sup> 1798.

#### Charges

1799

June 1	Paid Insurance Ship and Cargo, Portsmouth to London		
	£30,000 @ 2% plus Stamp Duty	£667 10s 0	
	Return for Convoy	150 0 0	517 10s 0
	Ditto £6,000 added	£133 10s 0	
	Return for Convoy	30 0 0	103 10s 0

July 6	Ditto £5,000 on Ship at Deptford		
	3 months to 6 October 1799		9 3s 6
	Ditto £10,000 on Goods in Warehouse		
	to 6 June 1800		17 18 6
	Ditto at Royal Exchange continued		
	to 21 February 1801		75 0 0

1801

Febry 20	Ditto £6,000 continued to 21 May 1801		7 10 0
April 24	to E. Fennell for coals wood and candles		5 4 4
	To Robt Yuills order for 4 men assisting navigating		
	the ship from Portsmouth to London		10 10 0

<sup>1</sup>Dr French Laurence, a prominent lawyer in Doctors' Commons. Laurence generally represented claimants rather than captors.

<sup>2</sup>The capture was of course in December 1798. In an otherwise meticulous account this is an extraordinary lapse. There is no suggestion that it might be deliberate, and no apparent reason for it to be so.

	to Do. To pay men for navigating the ship from Portsmouth to Deptford	70	7	0
	to paid Bill to Edward Sherlock Pilotage from Downs to Gravesend	7	7	0
	to Thos Irons assisting bringing the ship Up to Deptford	4	4	0
	to ditto for his disbursements for the ship	6	6	0
	to order for Silmers for beef etc.	2	1	9
August	to Mr Parkes Disbursements at Plymouth	103	19	6
	To Mr Atkins for Mr Scarlett ditto	41	10	2
1800				
March 20	Paid Mr Heseltine Proctors Bill in Doctors Commons	434	14	0
	Paid fees on giving Bail in Doctors Commons to answer Appeal and obtain Decree, Security Bonds, Marshal, Deputy and Clerks	47	0	0
	Expences at Lisbon paid by Captain Blackwood	125	6	0
	Repaid Capt Blackwood for paid by him to 3 men Out of the Eenrom on account of their wages	12	0	0
	To paid John Porter late of the Eenrom more on Account of his wages	8	0	0
	To Mr Heseltine's final Proctor's Bill			
	In Appeals	461	13	1
	Abate to be paid by the Appellants	209	0	0
	Registering Power of Attorney	2	16	8
	Affidavit inhibiting account proceeds in Doctors Commons	1	11	8
	Advertising account in Gazette	1	6	0
	Advertising payment in Gazette	13	0	
	Certifying Prize List Navy Office	1	6	0
	Making out ditto for payment	1	1	0
	Stamps for ditto )			
	Recalls )	15	13	0
	Carriage of papers, postage etc. )			
To Agency on £4,600 ship				
	£26,138 5 10 cargo @ 5 per cent	1,536	18	0
Total Charges		3,428	0	1
1802				
May 31	Balance due Brilliant carried down	24,845	17	1

## Receipts

Ship sold to H.Barke & Co. Brokers	£4,600			
Prize Duty etc	431 18 0	4168	2	8
Cargo sold as per account	£26,138 5 10			
Prize Duty etc	2,032 10 8	24,105	15	2
		28,273	17	2
1802				
May 31 By balance brought down		24,845	17	1
Abate one-eighth Lord Radstock's share <sup>1</sup>		3,105	14	7
		21,740	2	6
By Interest <sup>2</sup>		1,835	12	3
Due <i>Brilliant</i> Captain, Officers and Company		23,575	14	9

## Part 2

The *Twee Gebroeders*, 1799–180116. Log of *HMS Espiegle*, Commander J. Boorder<sup>3</sup>

Monday 1 July

Wind NW Borkum Light 4 leagues

pm<sup>4</sup> Mod breezes and cloudy, waited on ye. Commodore, at 7 parted company with squadron having 4 armed boats and 2 armed schoots in co. 7½ past came to in 5 fms Borkum island SSE 3 leagues sent ye boats inshore am mod and clear ½ past 8 came on board with ye boats except one, which being sent with a flag of truce was detained by sevl. Dutch

<sup>1</sup>William Waldegrave, Lord Radstock; Lt. 1772; Capt. 1776; RA 1794; Gov. Gen. and C.-in-C., Newfoundland, 1797. *Brilliant* was operating under his orders, having brought a convoy across the Atlantic.

<sup>2</sup>A common complaint about prize money was that agents holding funds not yet released by the court could use them to earn interest and enrich themselves at the expense of the captors. Inclusion of interest in the Prize Account was unusual at this stage of the wars, but became more common in the final years.

<sup>3</sup>The ship had been operating off the coast of Groningen since 22 June 1799.

<sup>4</sup>The log runs from noon to noon, the date quoted being noon on the second day.

gun vessels, who attacked and fired upon ye boats a considerable time in His Prussian Ms. dominions.

*Thursday 11 July*

Wind NW – NE Schiermonikoog SE 5 miles

Pm Mod & clear wr. Prepared ye boats for an expedition and came to in 6 fms. Ameland bearing south 2 miles Cutters and boats of ye squadron in co at 7 ½ past sent ye boats inshore am light breezes and hazy, weighed & stood further in shore at 5 came to in 5 fms at 10 ye boats ret'd. Having seen a gun vessel and several schoots.

*Friday 12 July*

Calm – SE Schiermonikoog SSE 4 leagues

Pm inclining to calm. Boats 10 in no. left ye ship heard several guns in ye SW. At 4 saw a vessel on fire near Ameland. At 10 ye boats ret'd. with 3 galliots, having burned a gun vessel laden with brass guns and ordnance stores. Am strong breezes and cloudy ye squadron weighed, manned prizes and sent them to England.

*Saturday 13 July*

South Borkum Tower SSE 8 miles

Pm Mod. & cloudy wr. Answd. Signal for a capt. Am strong gales and squally at 3 Capt. Mackenzie came on board with chief of ye squadn. Boats manned armed bore up for ye west Emms. 2 armed schoots, *Courier* and *Nancy* cutters. At 7 saw 3 gun vessels on ye Watt, opened our fire upon them, they having cut and stood in shore. At 8 came to in 5 fms ½ past ceased firing, they being in shoal water and out of gunshot. Saw several vessels on ye Watt and 2 Dutch gun vessels running up ye Eastern Emms.

*Sunday 14 July*

Wind NW at anchor in the West Emms

Pm strong gales and squally wr. At 1 ye boats left ye ship. At 6 they were obliged to return, not being able to act from ye badness of ye weather. At

8 they put off again am strong gales, the boats ret'd. with 6 laden & 3 light vessels. At 6 shifted our berth for ye protection of the prizes.

17. *Log of the Courier Armed Cutter, Lieut. and Commander  
T. Searle<sup>1</sup>*

*Thursday 11 July 1799*

Wind NNE

... in company with HMS *Circe*, *Pylades*, *L'Espiegle* and *Nancy* cutter Emden Church SE 6 miles. At 6 pm bore away for the NE Gat of Emden with the *Espiegle* and *Nancy* cutter and boats mann'd and arm'd from HMS *Circe* and *Pylades* At ½ past 11 came to anchor above the first buoy of the NE Gat of Emden, the boats went in shore on an expedition. At 3 am weighed and came to sail at 5 anchor'd above the second buoy of Emden Gat, at 6 the boats returned to their respective ships. At 10 weighed and came to sail, shifted our berth; the boats with a Gun Boat went into Emden mann'd and arm'd on an expedition. At meridian anchor'd in 6 fms.

*Friday 12 July*

Wind ESE

Light breezes and fine wr. At ½ past 1 heard several guns from the gunboat at ½ past 3 weighed and shifted our berth to the red buoy. At 5 pm the Gun Boat and ships boats returned with 3 captured vessels from the expedition. At 9 pm weighed and came to sail. At ½ past 12 anchor'd At ½ past 1 am the commodore sent men on board the captured vessels to take them to Yarmouth at 3 am weighed and came to sail at 9 the Commodore made signal to chase to the westward at 10 boarded a ship from Yarmouth bound to Emden, bore down to the Commodore with a Hoy in company.

*Saturday 13 July*

Wind WSW Off Borkum

Light breezes and small rain At 3 pm chased and fired 3 guns shotted and 4 musquets at a Hoy and fishing boat, brought them to, found the Hoy to

<sup>1</sup>Thomas Searle, Lt. 1796; Cdr 1799; Capt. 1808; CB 1815; RA 1846; d. 1849.

be from London bound to Emden, carry'd the fishing boat to the Commodore, sent men on board a Hoy to Yarmouth. At 11 bore away for the West Ems, at 4 pass'd the first buoy of the West Ems at 5 passed Borkum island, at 6 am 3 Dutch gun boats cut from their anchors, gave chase and fired at them without effect and came to anchor close to the *Espiegle*. The Lieut. went on board, Borkholm [Borkum] island bearing NNE. At meridian the boats went from the *Espiegle Courier* and *Nancy* cutter manned and armed after some vessels at anchor to windward.

*Sunday 14 July*

Wind SSW

Strong gales and squally wr. At 4 pm the boats returned at 7 pm the Lieut went on board a gunboat with the *Courier's* boat mann'd and arm'd on an expedition after some vessels lying in the Wat – at 8 am 6 sail of Hoys were sent from the gunboat and anchor'd astern of the *Espiegle*. At meridian riding in the West Ems above the 5th buoy Borkum island bearing NNE.

*Monday 15 July*

Wind WSW

At 6 pm the gunboat and boats returned and brought with them 2 Hoys laden and 1 do. Light – weighed and shifted our berth At 9 pm anchor'd. At 4 am the *Espiegle* made signal for weighing At 7 fired 2 guns shotted at a hoy, brought too and sent her to the Commodore at 9 am got the guns and stores from the gunboat.

# 18. *Log of HMS Pylades, Captain Adam Mackenzie*<sup>1</sup>

*Thursday 11 July 1799*

Wind variable Ameland SSW 4 miles

Pm Mod breezes and clear wr. Spoak the *Circe* Tk'a ship and hove to *L'Espiegle*, *Courier* and *Nancy* cutter joined company at 7. Went on board *L'Espiegle* with cutter and launch manned and armed ½ past 12 am came to with best bower in 7 faths west end of Ameland SW 3 miles at 10 got under weigh and made sail

<sup>1</sup>Adam Mackenzie, Lt. 1790; Cdr 1796; Capt. 2 Sept. 1799; d. 1823.

*Friday 12 July*

... at 2 brought to with best bower in 7 faths. Saw a vessel fire in the inner part of the Gat at 10 cutter and launch ret'd. at 4 am made sail for signals and squadron in company light breezes and cloudy<sup>1</sup>

### 19. *Log of HMS Circe, Captain Robert Winthrop*<sup>2</sup>

*Thursday 18 July 1799*

Wind Calm – variable 53 40 N Burcum [Borkum] Lighthouse bearing SSE ¼ W compass distance 4 leagues

Pm Fresh breezes and cloudy weather brought too and examined a galliot from Norway. Am light breezes and fair weather a Black Assage [?] boat brought a letter from Captain Mackenzie giving an account of the success of the Expedition made *Pylades* signal to come within hail at 9 observed the *L'Espiegle* &c. with 9 sail of detained vessels in company coming out of the Ems[.] at meridian *Pylades*, *L'Espiegle*, *Courier* and *Nancy* cutters and 9 sail in company Lost in the Ems the launch and so and sundry ordnance stores.

*Friday 19 July*

Wind variable ESE – SE – SSE The Fly [?Vlie] island bearing SSE distance 4 leagues

Pm moderate and cloudy – the detained vessels in company viz. *Twee GeBroders* from Hamburg to Amsterdam *Twee GeBroders* from ditto to ditto *Margaretta Sophia* from Ditto to Rotterdam *Vrouw Christiana Maria* from Bremen to Amsterdam *Do Twe Guesters* [*De Twee Gesusters*] from Hamburg to Amsterdam *De Vrouw Hanneke* from Bremen to Amsterdam *De Stadt Oldenburgh* from Rotterdam to Emden *De Vrouw Henrietta Margretta* and *Frederick* of Emden in ballast sent 16 empty puncheon on board the *Frederick* answered private signal to His Majesty's Ship *Latona*<sup>3</sup> Captain went on board HM Ditto *Latona* *L'Espiegle* and *Nancy* cutter in

<sup>1</sup>Astonishingly, there is no more in the log about the result of the 'expedition' nor the prizes taken. Perhaps Capt. Mackenzie was too busy composing his letter to Winthrop about his success, see [19] below; but that letter is no longer part of the record.

<sup>2</sup>Robert Winthrop, Lt. 1790; Capt. 1796; RA 1819; d. 1832.

<sup>3</sup>38-gun frigate, Capt. Frank Sotheron, senior officer of the force (see James, *The Naval History of Great Britain*, vol. 2, p. 340).

sight *Courier* cutter and *Circe* sail in company *Yong Yan* [*Jonge Jan*] in tow.

20. *Judgment of Sir William Scott in Twee Gebroeders, Alberts Master, 20 July 1800*

This was a case respecting four *Dutch* ships, taken in the *Western Eems*, in or near the *Groningen Wat*, by boats, sent from *L'Espiegle*, then lying in the *Eastern Eems* (Plate III). The material point of the case turned on the question of territory. The *Prussian* consul claiming restitution (by the direction of the *Chargé des affaires of Prussia*), on a suggestion, that it was a capture made within the protection of the *Prussian* territory.

JUDGMENT.

*Sir W. Scott.* – This ship was taken on the 14th July 1799, on a voyage from *Emdden* to *Amsterdam*, which was then under blockade; a claim has been given by the *Prussian* government, asserting the capture to have been made within the *Prussian* territory. In the course of the discussion, which this suit has produced, it has been contended, that although the act of capture itself might not take place within the neutral territory, yet, that the ship to which the capturing boats belonged, was actually lying within the neutral limits; and, therefore, that wherever the place of capture might be, the station of the ship was in itself sufficient to affect the legality of the capture.

Upon the question so proposed, the first fact to be determined is, the character of the place where the capturing ship lay; whether she was actually stationed within those portions of land and water, or of something between water and land, which are considered to be within the limits of the *Prussian* territory? On this point, I am inclined to think, on an inspection of the charts, and on hearing what has been urged, that she was lying within the limits to which neutral immunity is usually conceded. She was lying in the eastern branch of the *Eems*, within what may, I think, be considered as a distance of three miles, at most, from *East Friesland*: an exact measurement cannot easily be obtained; but in a case of this nature, in which the Court would not willingly act with an unfavourable minuteness towards a neutral state, it will be disposed to calculate the distance very liberally; and more especially as the spot in question is a sand covered with water only on the flow of the tide, but immediately connected with the land of *East Friesland*, and when dry, may be considered as making part of it. I am of opinion, that the ship was lying within those limits, in which all direct hostile operations are by the law

of nations forbidden to be exercised. That fact being assumed, I have only to enquire, whether the ship being so stationed, the capture which took place, was made under such circumstances, as to oblige us to consider it as an act of violence, committed within the protection of a neutral territory.

It is said that the ship was, in all respects, observant of the peace of the neutral territory; that nothing was done by her, which could affect the right of territory, or from which any inconvenience could arise to the country within whose limits she was lying; inasmuch as the hostile force which she employed, was applied to the captured vessel lying out of the territory. But that is a doctrine that goes a great deal too far; I am of opinion, that no use, of a neutral territory, for the purposes of war is to be permitted; I do not say *remote* uses, such as procuring provisions and refreshments, and acts of that nature, which the law of nations universally tolerates; but that, no *proximate* acts of war are in any manner to be allowed to originate on neutral grounds; and I cannot but think, that such an act as this, that a ship should station herself on neutral territory, and send out her boats on hostile enterprizes, is an act of hostility much too immediate to be permitted; for, supposing that even a *direct hostile use* should be required, to bring it within the prohibition of the law of nations; nobody will say, that the very act of sending out boats to effect a capture, is not in itself an act directly hostile – not complete indeed, but inchoate, and clothed with all the characters of hostility. If this could be defended, it might as well be said, that a ship lying in a neutral station might fire shot on a vessel lying out of the neutral territory; the injury in that case would not be consummated, nor received, on neutral ground; but no one would say, that such an act would not be an hostile act, immediately commenced within the neutral territory: And what does it signify to the nature of the act considered for the present purposes, whether I send out a cannon-shot which shall compel the submission of a vessel lying at two miles distance, 'or whether I send out a boat armed and manned to effect the very same thing at the same distance? It is in both cases the direct act of a vessel lying in neutral ground; the act of hostility actually begins, in the latter case, with the launching and manning and arming the boat, that is sent out on such an errand of force.

If it were necessary, therefore, to prove that a *direct* and *immediate act* of hostility had been committed, I should be disposed to hold that it was sufficiently made out by the facts of this case. – But direct hostility appears not to be necessary; for whatever has an immediate connection with it is forbidden; you cannot, without leave, carry prisoners or booty into a neutral territory, there to be detained, because such an act is an immediate continuation of hostility. In the same manner, an act of hostility

is not to take its *commencement* on neutral ground: It is not sufficient to say it is not completed there – you are not to take any measure there that shall lead to immediate violence; you are not to avail yourself of a station, on neutral territory, making as it were a vantage ground of a neutral country, a country which is to carry itself with perfect equality between both belligerents, giving neither the one or the other any advantage. Many instances have occurred in which such an irregular use of a neutral country has been warmly resented, and some during the present war; the practice which has been tolerated in the northern states of *Europe*, of permitting *French* privateers to make stations of their ports, and to sally out to capture *British* vessels in that neighbourhood, is of that number; and yet even that practice, unfriendly and noxious as it is, is less than that complained of in the present instance; for here the ship, without sallying out at all, is to commit the hostile act. Every government is perfectly justified in interposing to discourage the commencement of such a practice; for the inconvenience to which the neutral territory will be exposed is obvious; if the respect due to it is violated by one party, it will soon provoke a similar treatment from the other also; till, instead of neutral ground, it will soon become the theatre of war. On these grounds, I am of opinion, that this capture cannot be maintained, and I direct these vessels to be restored.

[On prayer for costs and damages]

*Court.* – With respect to that, I think the situation in which the vessels were stationed, was too dubious to affect the parties with any intentional violation of neutral rights. The capture may have arisen from misapprehension or mistake. It is very different from a case of actual attack on clear neutral territory. There is no sufficient reason to induce me to give costs and damages against the captors.

21. *Affidavit of James Boorder, Esquire, late commander of His Majesty's sloop, l'Espiegle (and others)*

That on or about the sixteenth of July,<sup>1</sup> Captain *Winthrop* gave directions to the commanders of his Majesty's aforesaid vessels to send their boats armed, as likewise a fishing vessel that had been taken from the enemy, and fitted out as a gun-vessel, up the western branch of the Eems so as to get on the eastern part of the *Groningen Watt* at day-light, and bring away as many vessels as they could take in the *Watt*, in most parts of which

<sup>1</sup> Presumably 1799. The actual date was 11 or 12 July.

vessels lie aground at low water, and their crews often walk from them to the *Dutch* coast; and these deponents say, that when the boats belonging to his Majesty's vessels of war got near the eastern edge of the *Watt*, they found two or three *Dutch* gun vessels lying there as guard ships for the purpose of protecting, as they verily believe, the *Watt*; which being of too superior force for the boats to attack, a small boat, belonging to his Majesty's sloop *Pylades*, with her gunner and four seamen, of which the said *Samuel Ray* was one, was sent to the *Dutch* commanding officer with a message under a flag of truce; but instead of sending an answer by the said boat, the *Dutch* commanding officer detained her as a prize, and made the gunner and seamen prisoners of war, and immediately commenced a heavy fire on the other boats, which continued for some time, the *Dutch* gun-boats passing them down the river; and that the said boats joined their respective ships at sea, during the day, when it being determined to send a greater force to take or drive away the *Dutch* gun-boats from their stations, such force was put under the command of Capt. *McKenzie*, consisting of his Majesty's sloop of war *l'Espiegle*, and the *Courier* and *Nancy* armed cutters, the fishing vessel before mentioned, and the boats of his Majesty's ships *Circe* and *Pylades*, all of which were fitted out at sea; and that on the thirteenth day of *July*, to the best of their recollection, at day break, the said armed force proceeded up the western *Eems*, his Majesty's ships being then cruising off the western entrance thereof; and on approaching near the eastern end of the *Watt*, three *Dutch* gun vessels which were laying there, cut or split their cables, and made off towards *Delfziel*, the force under Capt. *McKenzie's* command keeping a brisk fire on them; and these deponents *James Boorder*, *Wm. Oldfield*,<sup>1</sup> *John Longbotham* further say, that Captain *McKenzie* directed all the vessels to anchor as near as possible to the place where the *Dutch* gun-boats had been lying, and which they accordingly did; and he ordered the smaller boats to proceed higher up the *Watt*, about seven or eight miles to the westward, where a number of merchant vessels were lying, but it blowing a gale of wind, and an ebb tide, the boats were prevented from getting near them; and these deponents further say, that the seamen belonging to the said boats then endeavoured to walk to the said vessels, but the flood tide drove them back, and they were obliged to return in the evening to his Majesty's ships, leaving the vessels they were in chase of a-ground on the *Dutch* coast about seven or eight miles further to the westward; that the boats were sent again the next and the following day, but most of the vessels had run off in the night tide, except those proceeded against in this Court; which not being able to escape the vigilance of the *British*

<sup>1</sup>Probably William Oldfield, Lt. 1801, d. 1831.

forces, were taken possession of, and secured and sent to *Yarmouth*, except one vessel, which was destroyed, owing to her not being sea-worthy, and some few which they did not think worth detaining; and that at the time of the capture of the said vessels, his Majesty's said forces were lying at anchor in, or very near the exact place in which the said *Dutch* gun-boats had been before laid, and from whence they had been as aforesaid driven.

## 22. *Affidavit of Henrick Christophers*

That he was born at *Embden*, which is his constant place of residence when not at sea, and is of the age of 54 years and upwards; that he is well acquainted with the river *Eems*, and with both the *Eastern* and *Western Eems*, and with the beacons, marks, and buoys, of the same; and that he also well knows that such beacons serve not only to shew the navigation, and depth or shallowness of the water, but also the extent of the territory belonging to *East Friesland*, and the city of *Embden*; that about 37 years ago he, the deponent, was mate of and on board the vessel called, as he believes, *Trie Gesusters*, whereof *Jacob Siemons* was master, and well remembers the said captain *Siemons*, who had been appointed by the magistrates of *Embden* for that purpose, putting down beacons in different parts of the said river, commencing eastward on the *Bauze Bulge* (near the flat called the *Ranzel*, carrying on the same at different distances, as far as that part of the *Watt* or sand which is opposite the *Lawers*, near the *Dutch* island called *Schier Marmihoog*, and which in the map hereto annexed, is now marked with a red line, to the *Groningen Watt*, which runs to the head of the said sand; and he further saith, that he hath known instances, where, if a beacon hath been set beyond the aforesaid red mark, so as to come upon the *Groningen Watt* which commences at the said red mark, the *Dutch* to whom the said *Groningen Watt* belongs, would take them up and throw them away, as having been placed beyond the *Prussian* territory; and the deponent also saith, that although the *Dutch* province of *Groningen* skirts the said *Prussian* territory, yet no greater distance from the shore towards the same is considered and as the deponent hath always understood, hath been considered as belonging to the *Dutch*; than a person could throw with an iron or horse-shoe from the shore; and the deponent lastly saith, that in the *Watt* within the *Prussian* territory to the west, (the extent of which is now marked with the red line), there runs not at ordinary tides more than four to four and a half feet water in depth; and that he, the deponent, was engaged in the service of the said captain *Siemons* in placing the beacons, and attending to them, and to the buoys, for more than two years.



23. *Affidavit of Harms Steffers, Jan Lubber, and Gerrit Harms de Vrom*

That they are respectively masters of *Prussian* merchant ships, were born within the territory of his *Prussian* majesty, except the aforesaid *Harms Steffers Heyn*, who was born at *Papenberg*; and have been from children used to the sea, and also well acquainted with the *Eastern* and *Western Eems*, and the navigation of the same; [section omitted, confirming the testimony of Christophers above] and the deponents further depone, that they have always understood that the said *Prussian* territory runs as near to the *Dutch* coast of the province of *Groningen*, as within the distance that a person standing on the shore could throw an iron or horse-shoe towards the sea, and also that all within the buoys appearing on the said map, on the *Eastern* and *Western Eems*, is and always has been considered as *Prussian* territory; and the deponents, referring to the said map, lastly say that the beacons, three of which appear near the aforesaid *Bauze Bulge*, not only serve to shew the navigation or depth or shallowness of the water, but also, as they have always understood, are meant to express the extent of the *Prussian* territories; and that there are at different distances, although not drawn in the said map, many beacons extending as far westward as the aforesaid red marks.

24. *Judgment of Sir William Scott in The Twee Gebroeders, Northolt Master, 27 November 1801*

This was a case of considerable importance, as it respected the claim of a sovereign state for a right of territory over the spot where the capture in question was alleged to have taken place. The case arose on the capture of vessels in the *Groningen Watt*, on a suggestion that they were bound from *Hamburgh* to *Amsterdam*, then under blockade; and a claim was given under the authority of the *Prussian* minister, averring the place in question to be within the territories of the king of *Prussia*.\*

\* The claim of the *Prussian* consul described the captured vessels to have been lying at anchor upon the *Outhousen Watt*, near *Eems* close to the third beacon; and the capture to have been made 14th, *July*, 1799, by a boat from *L'Espiegle*, then lying in the *Wester Balg*, and also on the river *Eems*, and within the territories and dominions of his *Prussian* majesty. – The affidavit of the captors gives a different account of the situation of the capturing vessel, see Appendix.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>It is not clear whether the 'Appendix' referred to is the map (Plate III), or Boorder's affidavit.

## JUDGMENT

Sir W. Scott – This is the case of a ship and goods proceeded against for a breach of the blockade of *Amsterdam*; they are claimed as being taken on neutral territory; but it is denied on the part of the captors that they were *so* taken.

On the blockade of *Amsterdam* this Court has been inclined to hold generally, that all sea passages to *Amsterdam* by that great body of waters, the *Zuyder Zee*, were blockaded, supposing those sea passages to be in the possession of the enemy: Such as were in the possession of neutrals, It was of opinion, were not included, unless the blockading force could be applied at the interior extremity of their communication. Whether the present capture in question was made in a sea passage to the *Zuyder Zee*, belonging to the enemy or a neutral power, will be decided by the considerations which are to be examined in the further pursuit of this question. 2dly, Supposing that question determined against the immunity of the place of capture, another question is proposed, whether, the belligerent party having passed over neutral territory, *animo capiendi*,<sup>1</sup> to the place where his rights have been exercised, those rights of capture so exercised are not thereby invalidated?

The capture is represented on both sides to have been made in the *Watt*, which runs along the coast of *Groningen*, by two or three of his Majesty's ships that went up the *Eems*. It is not, I think, contended, that the capturing ships were stationed on the neutral territory, unless the whole of the *Watt* passage is to be so considered. The precise place where the capturing ships lay, is not very distinctly marked; but the balance of evidence inclines to establish, that they were on the other side a line of buoys, which Captain *McKenzie* swears were considered as being on *Dutch* territory, and that he placed his ship as near as possible in the place where some *Dutch* 'armed vessels (which were driven away on his approach) were stationed. On the whole that is to be collected from the evidence, as to the exact spot, I am led to suppose, that the ships were not stationed on neutral territory, unless the whole of the *Watt* passage is to be so considered.

It is scarcely necessary to observe, that a claim of territory is of the most sacred nature – In ordinary cases where the place of capture is admitted, it proves itself; the facts happen within acknowledged and notorious limits; no enquiry is either required or permitted. But otherwise, when it happens in places which the neutral country does not possess by any general principle or by any acknowledged right; in such

<sup>1</sup>For the purpose of capture.

a case, it being contended by those who represent the belligerent state, that no right exists, and that therefore the capture is free and legal, it can never be deemed an act of disrespect on the part of the foreign tribunal, if it proceeds to inquire into the fact of territorial rights – certainly not with a view of deciding generally upon such rights, but merely with respect to this particular fact of capture – not for the purpose of shaking or invalidating such rights, but that it may enforce a legal observance of them, if the facts, on which they depend, are competently established.

\* \* \*

[Section omitted, discussing claims based on ‘the sole assertion of princes’]

\* \* \*

Strictly speaking, the nature of the claim brought forward on this occasion, is against the general inclination of the law; for it is a claim of private and exclusive property, on a subject where a general, or at least a common use is to be presumed. It is a claim which can only arise on portions of the sea, or on rivers flowing through different states; The law of rivers flowing entirely through the provinces of one state is perfectly clear. In the sea, out of the reach of cannon shot, universal use is presumed; In rivers flowing through coterminous states, a common use to the different states is presumed. Yet, in both of these, there may, by legal possibility, exist a peculiar property, excluding the universal or the common use. Portions of the sea are prescribed for; so are rivers flowing through contiguous states; the banks on one side may have been first settled, by which the possession and property may have been acquired, or cessions may have taken place upon conquests, or other events. But the general presumption certainly bears strongly against such exclusive rights, and the title is a matter to be established, on the part of those claiming under it, in the same manner as all other legal demands are to be substantiated, by clear and competent evidence.

\* \* \*

[One paragraph, largely repetitive, omitted]

\* \* \*

It will be proper for me to consider, first the natural quality and position of this place. It is the *Watt* passage, running along the *Dutch* coast of *Groningen*, and called the *Groningen Watt*, to the *Lower Zee*. Some ancient history, traditional or other, has been alluded to indistinctly and without particular reference, as representing this *Watt*, with the neighbouring shoals, sands, and islands, to have formerly made part of the continent – If so, it must have formed part of *Groningen* – and if ever a part of *Groningen*, it is obvious that it was most unlikely to have been ceded. It must have been the whole substance and line of the external coast; the very last thing that would have been parted with to a neighbour, the very party, with whom alone it was to be expected that frequent occasions of competition and quarrel would arise.

Supposing such an avulsion ever to have taken place, I must still apply to the present remaining coast the title of *external coast*; for it appears difficult to accede to the propriety of a phrase repeatedly used in this discussion, calling this *the interior of Germany*. How is it to be considered as *interior*? It is quite open and patent to the sea; there are no headlands that shoot beyond so as to make what are called *chambers*; no shores projecting extra. There are some islands beyond; one of which, *Rottum*, lies at a considerable distance, and rather at the *Eastern* extremity, and is admitted, by these papers, to belong to *Groningen*, the *Dutch province*. So that if the certain legal effect of an island laying out at sea, could be to appropriate to the main land all the intermediate waters, these must belong to *Groningen*; with *East Friesland*, speaking physically, they can have nothing to do. They can be connected only politically, by some title of acquisition or conquest, of which no proof is or can be shewn; or by the grant of a common superior, or by exercise of ancient jurisdiction, implying some one or more of these titles.

\* \* \*

[In a lengthy discussion Scott then disposes of the argument on the part of the claimants that the *Watt* should be regarded as part of the river *Eems* and not as sea]

\* \* \*

... the whole question is again reduced to usage. If that is proved, it is certainly evidence of the most favoured kind: All men have a common interest in maintaining the sanctity of ancient possession, however, acquired; ancient land-marks and ancient sea-marks are *res sacerrimae*, and whoever removes them *piaculum esto*. Then what is the natural

evidence to be expected of ancient and common usage? And how much of this has been produced? How is ancient jurisdiction proved on such a subject? By formal acts of authority, by holding courts of conservancy of the navigation, by ceremonious processions to ascertain the boundaries in the nature of perambulations, by marked distinctions in maps and charts prepared under public inspection and controul, by levying of tolls, by exclusive fisheries, by permanent and visible emblems of power there established, by the appointment of officers specially designated to that station, by stationary guardships, by records and muniments, shewing that the right has always been asserted, and whenever resisted, asserted with effect. This is the natural evidence to be looked for generally; and such as it is more particularly reasonable to require, where a right is claimed against all general principles, and also against the natural rights and limits, and, indeed, against the independence and security of neighbouring states.

How much of this evidence is produced? A map or chart is produced, not published by authority, but adopted by authority; in which there is no distinction whatever made, that applies to the support of this claim. Upon that map, a person is examined at *Embden*, who puts a mark or distinction of his own as the limits of what he conceives to be the extremity of the *Prussian* territory. He proceeds to mention what is the only important fact in the case, on that side of the question; 'that thirty-seven years ago he was employed in fixing buoys and beacons, and that whenever he and his fellows fixed them beyond that point, the *Dutch* took them up and threw them away, considering them as signs of authority and jurisdiction.' This cannot undoubtedly be considered as of little or no weight? But that it should be conclusive, cannot be maintained: One observation immediately arises on it, that if this man and his fellows did fix these buoys beyond these limits, *they* at that time either did not perfectly comprehend the meaning of the buoys, or the exact limits of the territory; because, if they considered them as indications of territory, how came they to place them beyond what are now assigned as just limits, if these were recognized limits? This witness is confirmed by three other persons, shipmasters of *Embden* and *Papenberg*, with respect to their belief and understanding of the matter; but without referring to any particular fact as the ground of their opinion: They only say, 'that they understand the buoys and beacons at each extremity were marks of sovereignty[']; but no beacons whatever appear to be marked in this chart as in the *Watt* passage: and how is it possible that the Court can hold the buoys and beacons to be marks of sovereignty, when it appears that the city of *Embden* maintains establishments of that kind in the island of *Rottum*, which is admitted to be a *Dutch* island belonging to *Groningen*? Indeed the laying down buoys

and beacons is not in its nature to be considered as a necessary indication of territory, nor is it so understood by foreign writers: The laying them down may be a *servitus*, or a burthen, or it may be neither; it may be only, that this is a navigation in which the city of *Embden* is much interested, and the *Dutch* comparatively little, and therefore are content to leave the care and expense of it upon their neighbours. The claim relies on these, *as proofs of sovereignty*; perhaps the evidence is rather to shew it to be more directly a corporation right of the city of *Embden*; which of course would belong to the Count of *East Friesland*, the sovereign of that City.

\* \* \*

[Scott here cites several ancient authors in support of his doubt of the Prussian claim and its enforcement]

\* \* \*

As to all other evidence in this case, except the testimony of one person, speaking to the fact of his being employed to lay down buoys, and of having had a scuffle with some *Dutch* persons, as to the position of them; and excepting the depositions of two others speaking *to their belief only*, without assigning any reason of fact, there is a total silence: there are no tolls but for the *Borcum* light-house; no water bailiff, nor court rolls of any water jurisdiction, nothing in the nature of perambulations, no stationary officers or guard-ships. But on the contrary, there is a most material fact arising, that the *Dutch* not only had guard-ships in the *Groningen Watt*, but that they exercised actual hostilities there; certainly this exercise of hostility is not conclusive evidence, that the place where this happened was not *Prussian* territory; because it might be an irregularity on the part of the *Dutch*, and a subject of complaint on the part of *Prussia*; but as far as it appears on this evidence, it stands a naked fact; it does not appear to have been complained of, as an irregularity or encroachment on the *Prussian* territory; and therefore it is not to be presumed by this Court, that it is so to be considered.

On this evidence then, it is impossible for me to pronounce, that these captures are invalidated by being actually made on *Prussian* territory:—There remains the other question, whether they are not vitiated, by the capturing ship having passed over neutral territory, to accomplish the capture? As it alleged they passed up the *Western Eems*, and that the whole of that is *Prussian* territory. I have already intimated some doubts that might possibly be entertained upon the present evidence, whether the *Western Eems* is to be deemed at all times and in all parts of it clearly

*Prussian* territory; but supposing it to be so, is it a violation of territory, to have committed an act of capture after having passed over this territory to effect it? On this point there are some observations of law, and some of fact, that appear not unworthy of notice: In the first place, the place of capture is accessible by other passages, not asserted to be neutral; it is not alleged that a hostile force might not have reached these ships by another route, through the *Lower Zee*, or other communications: It is not to be said that they were so inclosed and protected on all sides by neutral territory, that you could not approach them without passing over it. In the next place, it is not the case of an internal passage into the heart of the country, into the *Home-gat*, if I may adopt their own term; it is a passage over an external portion of water, which you may prescribe for as territory, but not as inland river, or as part of the internal territory; it is not an entrance of an armed force, up an inward passage, to reach an enemy lying in the interior of the land.— Thirdly, It is an observation of law, that the passage of ships over territorial portions of the sea, or external water, is a thing less guarded, than the passage of armies over land, and for obvious reasons: An army in the strictest state of discipline, can hardly pass into a country without great inconvenience to the inhabitants; roads are broken up; the price of provisions is raised; the sick are quartered on individuals, and a general uneasiness and terror is excited; but the passage of two or three vessels, or of a fleet over external waters, may be neither felt nor perceived. For this reason, the act of inoffensively passing over such portions of water, without any violence committed there, is not considered as any violation of territory belonging to a neutral state — permission is not usually required; such waters are considered as the common thoroughfare of nations, though they may be so far territory, as that any actual exercise of hostility is prohibited therein. Fourthly, It is to be observed, that the right of refusal of passage, even upon land, is supposed to depend more on the inconvenience falling on the neutral state, than on any injustice committed to the third party, who is to be affected by the permission. *Grotius* and *Vattel*<sup>1</sup> both agree, that it is no ground of complaint, nor cause of war against the intermediate neutral state, if it grants passage to the troops of a belligerent, though inconvenience may ensue to the state beyond; the ground of the right of refusal being the inconvenience that such passages bring with them to the neutral state itself. This being the general state of the fact and of the law, it would be a proposition which could not be maintained in a full universal extent, that the passing over water, claimed as neutral territory, would vitiate any ulterior capture made on a third party. Suppose the case

<sup>1</sup>Scott cites the quoted authorities verbatim at this point.

of a war between *England* and *Russia*, and that the *Sound* was the pass in question, over which *Denmark* claims and exercises imperial rights, on stronger grounds than can be maintained in support of this claim; or suppose a war between *France* and *Russia*, and the *Dardanelles* to be the pass in question; or suppose any two powers exercising hostilities in the *Mediterranean*, after having passed through the Streights of *Gibraltar*, occupied by an *English* fortress on one side, and by *Tangier* on the other, formerly in possession of this country; could it be said in any of these cases, that captures made beyond this point of passage over neutral water territory, would be invalidated on any principle of the law of nations? Where a free passage is generally enjoyed, notwithstanding a claim of territory may exist for certain purposes, no violation of territory is committed, if the party, after an inoffensive passage, begins an act of hostility in open ground. In order to have an invalidating effect, it must at least be either an *unpermitted* passage, over territory where permission is regularly requested; or a passage under a permission obtained on false representation, and suggestions of the purpose designed. In either of these cases there might be an original misfeasance, and trespass, that travelled throughout and contaminated the whole; but if nothing of this sort can be objected, I am of opinion, that a capture, otherwise legal, is in no degree affected by a passage over territory, in itself otherwise legal and permitted.

Having before said that this act of capture was not exercised on neutral territory, as far as I am enabled to judge by the present evidence, I must pronounce that no sufficient objections are shewn against the validity of these captures; and that the ships must be adjudged lawful prize to the captors, being bound to *Amsterdam* in breach of the blockade.

## 25. *Prize Account for Twee Gebroeders (Northolt Master)*

'Dr. Twee Gebroeders taken by *L'Espiegle*, James Boorder Esq. Commander, on the 17 July 1799.

With Agents Isaac Clementson  
 Samuel Denton  
 A.H.Steward  
 James Harvey

To registering Power of	By net account of	525 12 7
Attorney, account of	Twee Gebroeders hull	
Sales and stamping,	and cargo per Brokers	
Prize and List	account	
	5 4 4	

To Fees paid certifying prize List, making out Rough and fair Prize Lists, advertising Account sales and Payment, postages of Papers and Letters and contingent expences during three years	7 15 0
To agents' commission on £525.12.7 At 5%	26 5 6
	<hr/> 39 4 10
To balance payable to captors	486 7 9
	<hr/> 525 12 7

### List of Documents

The documents used may be found in The National Archives.

#### Part 1

- 1 Log of HMS *Brilliant*, 28 December 1798 ADM 51/1245
- 2 Deposition of M. P. Fabritius, Supercargo of the ship *Eenrom* HCA 42/217
- 3 Deposition of C. C. Fronier HCA 42/217
- 4 Deposition of John Christan (or Christian) HCA 42/217
- 5 Deposition of John Porter HCA 42/217
- 6 Deposition of François Racheminan HCA 42/217
- 7 Replies to the Standing Interrogatories by J. A. Ponsaing HCA 42/217
- 8 Judgment of Sir William Scott in the case of the ship *Eenrom*, Fronier Master In C. Robinson, *Reports of Cases Heard in the High Court of Admiralty under Sir William Scott* (London, c. 1804), vol. 2, pp. 1 ff.
- 9 Paper invoked from the case of *The Nancy* (Knudsen Master) HCA 42/217
- 10 Paper concerning supersession of Captain Ponsaing HCA 42/217
- 11 Doctor's certificate regarding Captain Ponsaing HCA 42/217
- 12 Instructions to Christian Carl Fronier HCA 42/217

- 13 Affidavit of M. P. Fabritius to the Court of Appeal in Prize Causes HCA 42/217
- 14 Affidavit of Marshal Blucker to the Court of Appeal in Prize Causes HCA 42/217
- 15 Prize Account for the ship *Eenrom* HCA 2/342

## Part 2

- 16 Log of HMS *Espiegle* ADM 51/1283 fol.5
- 17 Log of the *Courier* armed cutter ADM 51/4026
- 18 Log of HMS *Pylades* ADM 51/1265
- 19 Log of HMS *Circe* ADM 51/1276 fol.4
- 20 Judgment of Sir William Scott in the case of the *Twee Gebroeders*, Alberts Master In C. Robinson, *Reports of Cases Heard in the High Court of Admiralty under Sir William Scott* (London, c. 1805), vol. 3, pp. 162 ff.
- 21 Affidavit of James Boorder, late commander of HM Sloop *l'Espiegle*, and others In C. Robinson, *Reports*, vol. 3, Appendix XI, Appendix p. 40
- 22 Affidavit of Henrick Christophers In C. Robinson, *Reports*, vol. 3, Appendix XII, Appendix p. 41
- 23 Affidavit of Harms Steffers, Jan Lubber and Gerrit Harms de Vrom In C. Robinson, *Reports*, vol. 3, Appendix XIII, Appendix p. 43
- 24 Judgment of Sir William Scott in the case of the *Twee Gebroeders*, Northolt Master In C. Robinson, *Reports*, vol. 3, pp. 336–54
- 25 Prize account for the *Twee Gebroeders* (Northolt) HCA 2/380



# V

## THE SUPPLY OF TIMBER FOR THE ROYAL NAVY, C.1803–C.1830

*Edited by*  
*P. K. Crimmin*

The crisis in the supply of naval ship timber in 1803–04 was the result of two related pressures. The first was the expansion of British naval commitments after war with France was renewed in May 1803. The British fleet then comprised approximately 608 ships of all sizes, 81 of them being 74-gun ships, the backbone of the line of battle. By 1813 there were a total of 899 ships, 143 of them 74s.<sup>1</sup> The victory at Trafalgar did not eliminate wearisome, wearing blockade of enemy ports and the very success of the Navy increased its tasks. Defeated at sea, French imperial power expanded dramatically on land. From 1806 the introduction of Napoleon's Continental System, his determination to outbuild Britain by sea and, after 1812, a war with the United States of America, imposed fresh duties calling for more ships. To meet these commitments and retain British naval dominance, a regular, reliable and, if possible, reasonably priced supply of ship timber was essential and was becoming more difficult to acquire.

In 1801 the annual timber consumption in the royal dockyards was over 36,000 loads. After 1803 it rose to 53,000 loads, in 1812 it had reached 74,000 loads, and although this figure fell with peace, it fell only to the figure for about 1803. After 1815 Britain was concerned to maintain a navy of a two-power standard against France and Russia and old 74s were replaced by 80-gun ships, heavier, longer, more powerful and consuming more timber. Yet defence costs were being reduced in deference to peace and naval estimates were fixed at approximately £6 million annually until 1830.<sup>2</sup>

The standard unit of measurement for ship timber was the load, of between 40 and 50 cubic feet. The average oak of ship timber size

<sup>1</sup>Roger Morriss, *The Royal Dockyards during the Revolutionary and Napoleonic Wars* (Leicester, 1983), p. 12, Table 1.

<sup>2</sup>Morriss, *Royal Dockyards*, p. 73; Andrew D. Lambert, *The Last Sailing Battlefleet: Maintaining Naval Mastery, 1815–1830* (London, 1991), pp. 110, 113; Andrew D. Lambert, 'Preparing for the Long Peace: The Reconstruction of the Royal Navy, 1814–1830', Society of Nautical Research Annual Lecture, 1994.

contained approximately one such load and provided, approximately, a ton of shipping.<sup>1</sup> An average 74-gun ship, between 1,600 and 1,900 tons, required about 3,000 loads of timber, mainly oak but also elm, beech, ash and fir, and was built at an approximate total cost of £60,000, of which about £35,000 represented hull timber. The masts and yards cost an additional £3,000–4,000.<sup>2</sup>

The royal forests could only supply a fraction of the Navy's needs, approximately 4,000 loads annually. Not until 1808 did the government finally adopt the recommendation of the Commissioners of Land Revenue, made 16 years earlier, to plant groves of oak trees, to furnish future naval timber, and although this was slowly implemented between 1810 and 1812, it was too late to alleviate any shortage of oak timber from this source in this period.<sup>3</sup> The bulk of naval timber was thus supplied by private contractors and if the Navy Board had always been willing to pay the contractors' prices there would probably have been sufficient native oak to supply the royal dockyards. But the price had to be within the government's financial limits. The burden of taxation, ever greater after 1803, the growth of the National Debt to figures which seemed overwhelming to contemporaries, all compelled the Navy Board to strike the best bargains it could with private contractors and to seek for alternative, foreign sources of oak and other timber when the price of English oak became prohibitive.

The second pressure therefore was that of price. The rise in the price of native oak timber after 1803 reflected a temporary scarcity, particularly of seasoned timber, but was part of an upward trend throughout the eighteenth century. By 1810–14 oaks had increased to 88 per cent above their 1690 value. After 1814 the value of oak timber fell less rapidly than the value of money and by the late 1820s oak trees sold for two and a half times more, in real terms, than they had in 1690, reaching the highest relative price they have ever commanded. Thereafter the price fell rapidly until by 1870 oaks had returned to their 1690 value.<sup>4</sup> Dr Oliver Rackham considers that complaints about oak shortages are 'almost wholly attributable to lack

<sup>1</sup>R. G. Albion, *Forests and Sea Power: The Timber Problem of the Royal Navy* (Cambridge, Mass., 1926), p. 9; Morriss, *Royal Dockyards*, p. 73, says two such loads provided a little over a ton of shipping.

<sup>2</sup>Morriss, *Royal Dockyards*, p. 79 Table 9; Albion, *Forests and Sea Power*, p. 93.

<sup>3</sup>Morriss, *Royal Dockyards*, pp. 80, 81 Table 11, 84; Albion, *Forests and Sea Power*, pp. 136–7.

<sup>4</sup>Oliver Rackham, *Ancient Woodland: Its History, Vegetation and Uses in England* (Dalbeattie, 2003; first published 1980), pp. 164–6. Rackham considers that much of the rise in oak prices is attributable to increased prices of oak bark. He estimates the average value of such bark in eastern England rose from one tenth of the value of the tree c. 1700 to one third of its value c. 1800 and remained at this ratio until 1850 at least (pp. 164, 165 Fig. 11.4).

of funds, organisation and transport rather than to lack of trees' and came from the naval dockyards rather than commercial shipbuilders.<sup>1</sup> Basing their views on experience and native prejudice, the Navy Board considered most foreign oak timber more liable to decay and less inherently sound than English oak. But these prejudices were forced to give way and experiments were made with other timber species. The naval authorities were fully aware of the dangers of reliance on foreign timber whose supply could be cut off by enemy action, hostile diplomacy or bad weather and whose price was ultimately out of their control. Yet they had little choice but to use it – at first for repairs only, increasingly for major construction. The following documents illustrate this search for timber and some of its associated difficulties between c. 1803 and c. 1830.

When the Earl of St Vincent became First Lord of the Admiralty in February 1801, he was already convinced of the corruption and waste in the royal dockyards and the inefficiency of the Navy Board, and determined on their reform. Immediate queries about timber supplies [1] were followed, once peace was declared in 1802, by dockyard visits and detailed investigations which St Vincent expected would expose and defeat the collusion he believed existed between the timber contractors, the Navy Board and dockyard officials. As part of this plan St Vincent tried to bypass the timber contractors, buying directly from private landowners, without much success [2, 3]. His clear-cut service views did not sufficiently take into account the difficulties under which the Navy Board operated and his attempts raised prices even more and alienated contractors. As a result, when war was renewed in May 1803, timber stores in the royal yards were insufficient and led to problems in building and repair. The supply crisis was ended as Lord Melville, First Lord of the Admiralty from May 1804, agreed the contractors' prices and lifted the severest quality restrictions, so that native oak timber again became available. The Navy Board had already begun a deliberate policy of 'searching for and importing foreign ship timber to alleviate shortages. This policy was now more rapidly implemented and extensive plans for increasing timber stocks were unveiled shortly after Melville took office [4]. Thereafter foreign timber was essential to the Navy.

<sup>1</sup>Rackham, *Ancient Woodland*, p. 154; Morriss, *Royal Dockyards*, p. 82. For some examples of small builders working for the Navy Board in 1804, see The National Archive (TNA), Public Record Office (PRO), Adm.69/165, Miscellaneous Various, ff. 53–7, Palmer of Yarmouth, ff. 163–70, Newman of Dartmouth, ff. 201–14, Atkinson of Hull. Losses in 1803–04 led to bankruptcy in 1807 for Tanner of Dartmouth; Ivor H. Smart, *Dartmouth Industry and Banking 1795–1925*, Dartmouth History Research Group, Paper 18 (Dartmouth, 1995); R. J. B. Knight, 'Devil bolts and deception', *Journal for Maritime Research*, April 2003, discusses the role of small shipbuilders in naval building in this period.

In 1802 John Leard, formerly a hemp contractor to the Navy Board, was sent by them to investigate timber supplies in the Hapsburg empire, notably the Istrian peninsular, Croatia and Dalmatia. Leard found plenty of oak suitable for ship building and the outlook was hopeful [5]. However, local transport problems and competition from rival French agents meant that, although some timber arrived at Malta dockyard, the bulk remained in Croatia, which the French army occupied in 1805 and again in 1809. Attempts by Leard to acquire Albania's plentiful, excellent timber between 1810 and 1814 were more successful. Though part of the Ottoman empire, Albania's ruler, the ambitious and ruthless Ali Pasha of Janina, was trying to make himself virtually independent. British sea power seemed his most useful ally and in return for a small British squadron in the Adriatic, supplying him with ordnance and protection against the Sultan and the French, he permitted 2,000 loads of timber, chiefly oak, to be felled and shipped to Malta [6].<sup>1</sup>

Russia, a source of naval stores, through its Baltic ports, possessed immense unexploited resources in the southern regions which might be tapped via the Black Sea. A report on such possibilities, sent by Admiral Sir John Borlase Warren, then British ambassador to Russia [7], prompted the Admiralty to send William Eton to explore them, between 1803 and 1805. Insuperable logistic problems, lack of port facilities and of an established commercial structure, and, after 1807, the hostility of the Tsar, prevented the development of trade with southern Russia.<sup>2</sup> The Baltic thus retained its traditional role as the major area for naval stores and timber, particularly masts, but between 1807 and 1812 the supply virtually dried up. Napoleon's decrees of 1806–07, issued from Berlin and Milan, attempted to exclude British merchant ships and goods from Europe. Neutral shipping was equally liable to be seized if suspected of trading with Britain and these decrees were observed by Denmark, the conquered north German states including Prussia, and Russia, after the Treaty of Tilsit 1807, a French ally. This would close the Baltic to British commerce.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>For a fuller description of Leard's attempts see P. K. Crimmin, "'A Great Object with Us to procure this Timber ...': the Royal Navy's search for ship timber in the eastern Mediterranean and southern Russia, 1803–1815", *The International Journal of Maritime History*, iv, no. 2, 1992, pp. 83–115.

<sup>2</sup>Admiral Sir John Borlase Warren (1753–1822) had published, anonymously, in 1791, a pamphlet titled 'A view of the naval force of Great Britain' and in the same year took an active part in founding the Society for the Improvement of Naval Architecture. In 1802 he was made a Privy Councillor and sent to St Petersburg as ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary on a complimentary mission to the new Tsar. For details of difficulties in southern Russia see Crimmin, 'A Great Object ...', 83–115.

<sup>3</sup>For trading and diplomatic difficulties in the Baltic see A. N. Ryan, 'The Defence of Trade with the Baltic, 1807–1813', *English Historical Review*, lxxix (1959), 443–66, and A. N. Ryan (ed), *The Saumarez Papers 1808–1812*, NRS vol. cx (London, 1968).

Britain responded by issuing Orders in Council forbidding neutrals to trade with French occupied territory and enforcing them by naval blockade. Timber prices and freight rates immediately rose, and, though a system of licences allowed a limited and illicit trade, supplies were seriously interrupted. One of the Navy Board's chief contractors in this region was the London firm of Solly and Sons. Edward Solly, the firm's agent in Prussia, by a combination of bribery, collaboration and shrewdness, got his ships and their cargoes out of the Baltic ports, often disguised as neutrals or officially destined for neutral states and provided with false papers [8].<sup>1</sup>

It was fortunate at this crisis point that increasing numbers of excellent masts and oak timber were exported from Canada. Suppliers such as Scott, Idles and Co., granted a monopoly in the Canadian timber supply, faced the usual difficulties in establishing a trade, not least high transport costs, and competition among them was fierce [9]. Yet the closure of many Baltic timber sources enabled them to extort more favourable freight charges from the British government vis-à-vis their Baltic competitors and to exert a near supply monopoly during these years.<sup>2</sup>

Despite reports from naval officers of plentiful timber at the Cape of Good Hope, it proved too expensive and difficult to exploit.<sup>3</sup> But accounts from captains taking convicts and stores to the penal colony of New South Wales listed a bewildering variety of timber species with naval potential [10].<sup>4</sup> The Navy Board immediately took advantage of this source and, from 1804, of the mast timber from the New Zealand kauri or cowdie pine, though amounts were limited by high freight charges.

<sup>1</sup>Issac Solly and Sons had offices at 15 St Mary Axe and 17 Coleman Street, London. Edward Solly (1776–1844), a younger brother, was an extremely successful business man, an art connoisseur and collector, highly regarded at the Prussian court. F. Herrmann, *The English as Collectors: A Documentary Chrestomathy* (New York, 1972), pp. 202–8. Solly increased his prices from 1807 until 1812, when he was temporarily dismissed as a contractor by the Navy Board. But Solly too had his difficulties: Danzig oak plank was £12 per load in 1806 and double that in 1809, when it could be had at all. Albion, *Forests and Sea Power*, p. 337.

<sup>2</sup>Albion, *Forests and Sea Power*, pp. 353–61, pp. 420–22, Appendix D; A. R. M. Lower, 'The Trade in Square Timber', in W. T. Easterbrook and M. H. Watkins (eds), *Approaches to Canadian Economic History* (Toronto/Montreal, 1967), pp. 28–48; for the effect on Halifax dockyard, see Julian Gwyn, 'The Halifax Naval Yard and Mast Contractors 1775–1815', *The Northern Mariner/Le Marin du Nord*, xi, no. 4, October 2001, 1–25.

<sup>3</sup>Albion, *Forests and Sea Power*, pp. 362–4; National Maritime Museum (NMM), ADM/BP/234, Nov.–Dec. 1808, Memorandum to Navy Board, 21 Dec. 1808.

<sup>4</sup>For further details see R. J. B. Knight and A. Frost (eds), *The Journal of Daniel Paine 1794–1797* (Sydney, 1983), Appendix II, 73–96. For the possibilities of the colony supplying naval stores to the East Indies station, see A. Frost, 'The Choice of Botany Bay: The Scheme to supply the East Indies with naval stores', *Australian Economic History Review*, xv, 1975, 1–20.

But it was Indian teak which was the Royal Navy's most successful foreign timber. Durable, strong, without knots and containing a preservative oil which enabled iron spikes to be used instead of wooden trenails, teak had long been known as excellent ship timber to Indian ship builders and the East India Company. Lord Melville had urged the building of warships for the Navy at the Company's Bombay yard (modern Mumbai) in 1804 [4] and had secured its co-operation in overseeing the work. Fine teak was reported to come from Malabar on the south west coast of India, poon wood for upper works, masts and spars from Mangalore on the southern Malabar coast. The forests of the kingdom of Pegu (Burma) also produced teak, inferior to that of Malabar but cheaper, more plentiful and easier to transport to Calcutta where local merchant shipbuilding was developing throughout the eighteenth century.<sup>1</sup> Indian supplies were not inexhaustible and familiar problems of suitable transport and expense meant proposals to import teak for use in British yards were not implemented [11]. The shortages of 1812 saw teak frame timbers brought home in those warships built in India, as the Navy Board had hoped six years before, but plans to establish new yards closer to teak sources eventually proved impracticable; instead naval ships were built at the established yards of Bombay.

The timber supply problem remained important after 1815. The comptroller of the Navy Board, Sir Thomas Byam Martin,<sup>2</sup> confronted the main problems in a series of memoranda in succeeding years [12]. He urged that peace gave the opportunity to implement a programme of necessary, deliberate ship repair and the possibility of building up a three-year timber stock, a long-desired aim of previous comptrollers [15]. But peace had also brought economic dislocation, an increased national debt, and demands for reduction in government spending, particularly in the armed forces, to which the Admiralty was compelled to respond with cuts in manpower, salaries and establishments. Against this background of peace, retrenchment and carefully scrutinised expenditure, the need for good financial management was paramount.<sup>3</sup>

Successful recovery of the imperial timber Leard had bought from 1803, but been unable to remove, provided the opportunity to cancel part of Austria's war debt and present Cabinet and Parliament with evidence of good

<sup>1</sup>C. Northcote Parkinson, *Trade in the Eastern Seas* (Cambridge, 1937), pp. 324–5.

<sup>2</sup>Sir Thomas Byam Martin (1773–1854), Comptroller of the Navy Board, February 1816–November 1831.

<sup>3</sup>The most recent account of the changes in thinking and practice in these post-war years and the effect on naval administration is in R. Morriss, *Naval Power and British Culture, 1760–1850: Public Trust and Government Ideology* (Aldershot, 2004).

management [13, 14].<sup>1</sup> George Smith,<sup>2</sup> engaged in Austrian timber negotiations, also visited Albania, confirming the excellence, availability and cheapness of its timber, so that between 1818 and 1820 Britain negotiated a diplomatic deal with Ali Pasha and the Sultan, whereby the tiny city state of Parga which, for fear of the Pasha, had placed itself under British protection, was handed over to him in return for exclusive unlimited ship timber.<sup>3</sup>

Once peace was established and financial constraints increased, the Navy Board's attitude to buying foreign timber hardened. Martin hoped to break the monopoly contractors had exerted on the Board, by opening up the market to wider competition [16] and his questionnaire to MacQuarrie [18] reflects the Board's desire for greater value for money and for more exact knowledge of local circumstances before it committed itself to spending large sums. One reason was that it now seemed possible to exploit colonial settlements for their timber more fully than before. Distance was still a barrier, but peace and the Royal Navy's supremacy had removed costly wartime dangers. So New Zealand was re-examined as a more regular supplier of masts and Tasmania, not previously considered, for frame timber [17, 18]. The possibilities of exploiting local timber at the Cape of Good Hope proved illusory [19]. But tentative exploration of West African timber had already begun and by 1831 the Navy Board was spending more on West African teak and Sierra Leone iroko than on English oak [20].

The naval authorities' fears that British timber would disappear, leaving Britain defenceless in war time, were real fears and continued as long as wooden ships were built. Even in 1857, when the end of wooden warships was within sight, John Edye, assistant surveyor to the Navy 1832–48, was urging the conservation of British oak and linking its demise with that of British naval superiority.<sup>4</sup> But the mythic properties of British oak could

<sup>1</sup>In 1805 Britain promised Austria a subsidy of £40,000 p.a. and an immediate cash advance for mobilisation costs against France. In 1809 she paid £750,000 in specie and £4 million in bills of exchange to Austria to continue the war. Gunther F. Rothenburg, *Napoleon's Great Adversaries* (Bloomington, Ind., 1982), pp. 82, 124. For the whole question of subsidies see John H. Sherwig, *Guineas and Gunpowder: British foreign aid in the wars with France, 1793–1815* (Cambridge, Mass., 1969).

<sup>2</sup>George Smith, Assistant Secretary to the Navy Board 1807–20, Secretary 1820–32. J. M. Collinge, *Office Holders in Modern Britain VII, Navy Board Officials 1660–1832* (London, 1978), p. 139. His significance is assessed in Morriss, *Naval Power and British Culture, 1760–1850*.

<sup>3</sup>P. K. Crimmin, 'Searching for British naval stores: sources and strategy, c. 1802–1860', *The Great Circle, Journal of the Australian Association of Maritime History*, vol. 18, no. 2, 1996, 113–24.

<sup>4</sup>David K. Brown, 'Wood, Sail and Cannon-Balls to Steel, Steam and Shells 1815–1895', in J. R. Hill (ed), *The Oxford Illustrated History of the Royal Navy* (Oxford, 1995), pp. 202, 208; NMM SPB/3, 'Remarks on the Subject of shipbuilding Timber etc. by M. John Edye to the Right Honourable Sir Charles Wood, GCB, Sept 1857'. This is an essay, with coloured, hand-drawn illustrations of various timber species, dedicated to Wood, First Lord of the Admiralty 1855–58.

no longer compete with the reality of the range of foreign and colonial ship timber from which the nineteenth-century wooden navy was built.

### 1. *Navy Board to Admiralty Secretary*

30 March 1802

Sir

In answer to your letter of the 13th Instant, signifying the directions of the Right Honourable the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, that we transmit to you for their information an account of the annual consumption of oak timber, knees, thickstuff and plank,<sup>1</sup> on an average including such as may prove defective, and to state why this account has not been sent agreeably [*sic*] to their Lordships order of the 26 Jany. 1776, and whether we have taken care to have a three year stock of timber,<sup>2</sup> conformable to the positive injunction in that order. We send you enclosed 'An Account of the Annual Consumption of Oak Timber, Knees, Thickstuff and Plank, also statements of the remains in several Yards in the last Six Years to the 31<sup>st</sup> December 1801.' [Reasons for not sending the necessary accounts follow]

In reply to the other part of your letter 'Whether we have taken care to have a three year stock of timber' We beg leave to state to their Lordships, that although it will be found by the account before mentioned not to be the case, the cause has not proceeded either from want of zeal, attention or exertion in this board to keep up the store of that article. During the whole of the war the annual consumption of oak timber has exceeded both in the Merchants' as well as the King's yards all former times; and judging from the best information we have been able to obtain on the subject, *much beyond the ability of the kingdom to supply to the same extent*; of course our offers of timber from the timber merchants (all of which have been accepted where there appeared a probability of their being fulfilled) have for some time past, fallen short of our necessary demands. In

<sup>1</sup>Knees are the curved timbers which support the ship's deck beams and connect them to the frame timbers. The shape was difficult to find naturally and such pieces were expensive. They were superseded by iron in the nineteenth century. Plank was the long, flat pieces of sawn wood, between two and eight inches thick which formed the outer shell and inner lining of a wooden ship. Thickstuff was heavier planking, more than four inches thick. See Albion, *Forests and Sea Power*, p. 9.

<sup>2</sup>The Admiralty first ordered a three-year timber supply in 1771, after the depletions of the Seven Years War. It was implemented in 1773 and though it failed during the war with America, was renewed by Sir Charles Middleton, later Lord Barham, when he became Comptroller of the Navy Board (1778–90). These reserves had been depleted during the war with France of 1793–1801.

addition to the timber purchased from timber merchants, we have occasionally bought supplies thereof from *gentlemen's estates through our own purveyors*, and likewise received *every stick* fit for the service that could be annually *cut in the King's forests*;<sup>1</sup> notwithstanding which we have never been able to obtain a three years stock, even when it did not exceed 66,000 loads, on which subject the Comptroller has held frequent communications with the first Lord of the Admiralty.

We have for some time past had this subject under our particular consideration, with the hope *that some plan* might be devised, by which a larger supply if the means exists in the country could be obtained for His Majesty's yards than has been produced by the ordinary method but having consulted with the merchant ship builders, and other persons conversant with the whole of the timber business, we find that a better method than what we have hitherto practiced cannot be adopted; consequently we shall return thereto, and shall endeavour to procure forthwith as large a supply as possible; but as there is too much reason to apprehend that this will not be adequate to our wants, it is our intention *to import such timber from abroad* as may be judged proper for naval purposes which although perhaps not of so good a quality as oak timber of the growth of this country will be found useful in many instances.

A.S.H., H.D., J.H., B.T.<sup>2</sup>

## 2. Benjamin Slade to Navy Board<sup>3</sup>

George Inn, Bewdley  
27 April 1804

Honble. Sirs

'Sir William Rule<sup>4</sup> left me at Bridgenorth on the 12th instant, with directions to proceed again to Welsh Pool, to attend the sale of the Vaynor

<sup>1</sup>The royal forests of greatest importance for the Navy in the eighteenth century were those of Dean (Gloucestershire), Alice Holt and the New Forest (both Hampshire), though timber also came from the forests of Hainault (Essex), Bere (Hampshire), Rockingham (Northamptonshire) and elsewhere. Albion, *Forests and Sea Power*, p.107.

<sup>2</sup>The initials conceal the names of members of the Navy Board: Sir Andrew Snape Hamond, Comptroller 1794–1806; Henry Duncan, Deputy Comptroller 1801–06; John Henslow, Surveyor 1793–1806; Benjamin Tucker, Commissioner, 1803–04. Evan Nepean was First Secretary to the Admiralty 1795–1804.

<sup>3</sup>Slade and Gould were timber purveyors, employed by the Navy Board to search for suitable timber.

<sup>4</sup>Sir William Rule, knighted in 1794, one of the two Navy Board Surveyors, 1793–1813.

Park Timber, and to purchase the lots nos. 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 8, and afterwards to follow him to Chepstow. At the sale I bid for the lots above mentioned and purchased lots 1, 2, 4 and 8 by private agreement with Mr Lyon for they were not sold at the sale the price not amounting to the value. Lot 3 and 6 were purchased at the sale far above the value, by people in the country. I run them to 15 Pr. Cent more than valued at, they were principally fit for plank. I acquainted your honors [*sic*] with the amount in my letter of the 18th instant enclosing the agreement.

I received a letter from Sir Wm. Rule from Chepstow dated 15th instant, and at near the same time Mr Gould received one directing him to proceed to view and value 301 oak timber trees at Mawley Hall, a seat of Sir Walter Blunt [*sic*]<sup>1</sup> near Cleobury, which was to be sold at Bewdley on the 26th instant with directions to purchase them if possible, as they were a fine lot of timber and desirable for the Navy. Mr Gould having two sales of timber, one on the 24th and 25th instant in the neighbourhood of Pool which Sir William had seen and wished to have, Mr Gould was obliged to attend them to make the purchase. Cleobury being 60 miles distant from Pool and the time short, on consulting we thought it best to go together to Sir Walter Blunt's immediately, which we did and in the way stopped at Acton Burnell about 8 miles from Shrewsbury to take some account of 200 oak trees which Sir William had seen and approved of. We reached Cleobury on Thursday the 10th about 2 O'Clock and proceeded to view the timber which with great exertion we finished the next day. On the 22nd was the sale for timber at Acton Burnell which I attended (Mr Gould having returned to Pool). There were two lots, one of 150 trees, and the other of 400 trees, the person who sold them having blended 200 trees very inferior in quality to those 200 which Sir William had seen and which he expected to go in a lot by themselves. The value we judged these 200 trees at was about 1300 [pounds sterling] and they were worth it. I pray leave to acquaint your honors with the issue of this sale as follows. The first 150 trees in which were several rundles or pollards,<sup>2</sup> the rest coarse and small sold for £820. The 400 trees, 200 of which were inferior and very much so, to the 200 trees as above mentioned sold for £2800. As they were so much above their value I could not buy.

I come now to the sale of yesterday of the 301 trees sold at Bewdley. The quantity we made of them was about 432 tons at 50 to the ton girt

<sup>1</sup>Sir Walter Blount, whose family seat had been Mawley Hall since the seventeenth century.

<sup>2</sup>Rundles or pollards. Trees cut back to produce a growth of young branches at the top and no good for ship timber.

measure, which with the bark and cordwood, we valued at £3200.<sup>1</sup> I attended the sale where there were many bidders who seemed combined against me and determined I should not purchase. I exceeded the valuation of 10 pr. cent, but was out bid, the timber sold for £3520 and I was told after the sale that if I had bid on they were determined to have the timber and, in short, observ'd my coming into the country, and the knowledge they had that Sir William was on such a business, had done the buyers very material injury at these sales. I had some conversation afterwards with some of the bidders, concerning buying timber of them, fit for the Navy delivered by land carriage either by the side of Severn, or the canals: the price they ask is 3s pr. foot after sided and measured by a Girt Measure.<sup>2</sup> I ventured to offer them from 2/4d to 2/6d pr. foot which they would not agree to.

I am ignorant where to write to Sir William for directions how to proceed. I therefore pray your honors will signify your pleasure. I think the sales of timber are now over in this country and I can be of no further service, the only method to follow, I am humbly of opinion is to purchase of those timber dealers who buy at auctions. Mr Hodges of Chepstow was at the sale at Acton Burnell but could not purchase, the value was so far above what he could venture to give.

I shall wait your orders at this place which I shall expect by return of post.

### 3. *Sir William Rule to Navy Board*

Navy Office  
29 April 1804

Gentlemen,

In consequence of your directions grounded on an order from the Right Honourable the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty for you to direct the junior surveyor of the Navy<sup>3</sup> to proceed after giving him full

<sup>1</sup>Bark, a valuable by-product of oak, much in demand in the tanning industry; cordwood, cut or stacked wood.

<sup>2</sup>Land transport of heavy, bulky loads like timber was always difficult, expensive and slow, and water transport much preferred. If such loads could be brought to the River Severn they could be floated down it to the Bristol Channel – sometimes loaded onto troughs or trows, the distinctive local barges and thence by sea in a timber transport, to the royal yards in the south of England (see [3]). Sided timber, de-barked timber, roughly shaped. Girt or great measure, an eighteenth-century usage, was a measurement across or around a non-flat surface, like a tree, to measure its growth.

<sup>3</sup>Rule was junior surveyor, appointed 1793, the senior being Sir John Henslow, surveyor 1784–1806.

instructions for his guidance, in the purchase of oak timber for the use of His Majesty's Navy, into such parts of the kingdom as were most likely to produce a supply, and having taken for my assistance two of the most experienced purveyors, I proceeded to Welshpool in Montgomeryshire, it being as high as the Severn is navigable, and from thence to most of the wharfs on the Severn between that place and Chepstow at which place the timber is landed from the troughs, and from thence shipped in vessels to be taken round the Land's end to the King's yards.

I read the provincial papers and followed up every information I could collect of the timber for sale, as well as the instructions I received from you, for the attainment of supplies, I afterwards proceeded into Shropshire, Worcestershire, Gloucestershire, Monmouthshire, Kent and Sussex, as the most likely counties to produce the article so much wanted, and have to lament that my endeavours have not been attended with more success.

You have been informed from time to time of my proceedings, but to bring it more immediately before you I have made the following statement

At Chepstow the timber merchants Bowsher and Co.<sup>1</sup> and Mr Buckle state that they shall have near 5000 loads the whole of which they engage to offer for the King's yards.

In Vaynor Park in Montgomeryshire bought at an auction at Welshpool 705 loads. I have authorised Mr Gould to purchase two other lots in Montgomeryshire about 450 loads. In Acton Burnell and Cleobury Mortimer in Shropshire valued by Messrs Slade and Gould who have directions to attend the auction and purchase it, if possible 800 loads. At Weavers Coppice near Bridgnorth belonging to Mr Brodie which you are in treaty for, and it has been felled three years<sup>2</sup> 800 loads.

The greater part of the above amounting to 2,755 loads is of large dimensions and in the event of the whole being purchased will prove very useful timber for the Navy: the two lots I have viewed in Kent and Sussex are too small for that purpose.

In addition to the foregoing I have sent Mr Mumford to view and report on some timber near Petworth in Sussex, to be sold by private contract and Mr Williams purveyor from Plymouth yard, has also directions to proceed from Chepstow to Aberystwyth to view and purchase some for

<sup>1</sup>William Bowsher was a partner with John Larking, together major timber contractors to the Navy Board in this period.

<sup>2</sup>Well-seasoned timber, ready for immediate use.

sale by auction in that neighbourhood should it be found fit for His Majesty's service.

I cannot conclude this subject without offering my opinion that the most likely way of getting supplies if the country can furnish the demand, is from the timber merchants who are intimately acquainted with the state of the timber in different counties and can collect it in small quantities at different sales.

4. *Enclosure in Lord Melville's letter to the Marquess Wellesley*<sup>1</sup>

4 July 1804

Plans proposed and in part acted upon by the Navy Board for obtaining a stock of timber for the service of His Majesty's Navy.

- 1st. To examine further into the complaints of the timber merchants as to the rigour used in the present mode of receipt of timber in the dockyards, and to apply such remedy as may appear necessary, also to give such advance on the present contract prices as to enable the contractors to meet the advance in price which has taken place all over the kingdom.<sup>2</sup>
- 2nd. To import as much foreign oak timber as can be procured from all parts of the world for the purpose of being used in repairs of all old ships so as to reserve the English oak entirely for the building of ships, or giving a slight repair to those of the best condition.
- 3rd. With a further view of lessening the consumption of oak timber we propose to repair ships upperworks with fir, and to substitute fir for oak in such parts of new ships as it may be applied to without injury to their strength and durability.

In regard to the first of these plans, after giving the subject the fullest consideration we propose to alter such parts of the printed contracts for

<sup>1</sup>Richard Wellesley, 1st Marquess (1760–1842), Gov. Gen. of Bengal.

<sup>2</sup>The rigour of the timber masters, appointed in 1801 by St Vincent, in examining timber received at the dockyards, to ensure it *exactly* conformed to the contract, and refusing that which did not, had seen the rejection of much timber, or the payment of a reduced price to the contractors. They had complained bitterly. Morriss, *The Royal Dockyards*, pp. 88–9. Melville cancelled the 1802 contracts which had left timber merchants out of pocket through rising prices, and raised the price permitted and the timber masters' examinations became less stringent.

timber as will put the contractors upon more certainty in the receipt of their timber without injury to the public as to quality, by which means together with the advance in price before mentioned we have a reasonable expectation of obtaining from the timber merchants in the present year, a supply of about 22,000 loads, added to which we expect to receive from the King's forests this year 3000 loads, and also a further quantity of 2000 loads purchased by Sir William Rule last month, making on the whole a quantity of about 27,000 loads; and we have likewise contracted for 15,000 loads of fir timber for the service of the present Year.

Of foreign oak timber we have already agreed for about 3000 loads for the present year from Upper Canada and we propose obtaining a much larger supply from thence for the next year. This timber is at present likewise intended for repairs only, though considered of a much better quality than American timber in general.

As timber from the Rhine in the present scarcity will be a desirable object; attempts are now making to procure it by way of Emden and if they prove successful about 1000 loads may be expected from that source.<sup>1</sup>

We had it likewise in contemplation to draw supplies from Dantzic [modern Gdansk] and Mr Solly, a Dantzic merchant had been encouraged to send over a ship load of the best he could procure by way of sample, but upon conferring with him as to the terms on which a quantity of this timber might be delivered, we find the price would be so exorbitant, being according to his calculations about £15 pr. load that we have not offered him any further encouragement to his proposals, but we are instituting enquiries in respect to the practicability of obtaining supplies from other ports within the Baltic.

The Adriatic holds out a prospect of affording large supplies of oak timber when the new road from Carlstadt [modern Karlovac] is completed which is expected to be done next year. A Mr. Adamich, a merchant well known at Fiume [modern Rijeka] has permission from the Imperial government to export annually for a certain number of years 1570 trees which he has offered either to deliver on contract or to send to England upon a commission, but if it should be judged expedient to push the supply which that country seems to offer to a great extent, it appears to be advisable to have a confidential agent upon the spot to negotiate all the particulars ...

The ports in the Black Sea appear to hold out a prospect of affording large supplies of timber provided the expense of conveying it to this

<sup>1</sup>These hopes were dashed by French advances into the area. Attempts to get timber from Holstein were similarly frustrated.

country should not be too great. A Mr Eton has been sent abroad to examine and report what advantages may be derived from that new source of commerce and a commission has been given him to the amount of £20,000 by the Navy Board and as much by the Victualling Board to purchase naval stores and provisions which are to be sent to Malta and the qualities and comparative prices with what might be sent out from this country is to be stated from thence by the naval storekeeper.

The next resource which it is conceived may reasonably be resorted to for keeping up the Navy is by extending the building of ships of war in India of teak timber which from the known durability of that species of wood cannot fail to be a consideration of the greatest importance and for the purpose of their repairs it is conceived each East India Ship returning to Europe might without inconvenience or injury to their stowage, bring by way of dunnage<sup>1</sup> a certain quantity of thick stuff and plank of teak wood. By these means in a few years a sufficient quantity might be obtained for keeping the teak ships in good condition for a great length of time.

There are other species of timber which altho' hitherto not in use in His Majesty's yards we are of opinion may be used to great advantage, such as larch from the East Country<sup>2</sup> and pitch pine from the southern parts of America. We shall however further consider this subject and make known the result to their Lordships.

### 5. *Navy Board to John Leard*

11 September 1804

Having at various times taken into our consideration the letters we have received from you during your late residence at Fiume and since your return from thence, upon the subject of procuring oak timber for the use of His Majesty's Navy from the Imperial forests in Croatia, Slavonia [modern Slovenia] and Istria [the modern Istrian peninsula] as well as from Albania, Ragusa [modern Dubrovnik] and Fiume, and the several documents you have forwarded to us relating thereto, by which it appears that Mr Andrea Lodovica Adamich has received intelligence from Vienna that several departments have unanimously and officially agreed to his proposals for exporting 3000 oak trees, annually for five years commencing so soon as the new road from Carlstadt [modern Karlovac] to Fiume is finished which is expected to be accomplished in the spring of next year,

<sup>1</sup>Loose wood used in the holds of ships to secure cargo and wedge it firmly.

<sup>2</sup>The Baltic states.

and it is also understood that if more timber be wanted it may be procured, which permission has since been extended to as many trees as can be spared and it also appearing that the timber in Istria and near the sea coast of the Emperor's dominions cannot be exported, there not being more than sufficient for their own consumption, and Mr Adamich having made proposals for procuring 30,000 trees from the Imperial and private forests in Croatia and Slavonia by paying down a proportion of their value which payment you estimate at £7500 averaging the said 30,000 trees at a supposed value of one guinea per tree and calculating the proportion of payment to be advanced at the rate of one quarter of its value.

And having laid before the Right Honourable the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty all the information we have received upon this subject and received their directions dated 31 July 1804 to take immediate measures for the 30,000 trees aforesaid being purchased for the use of the Royal Navy on the most advantageous terms for the public in our power, we do therefore hereby authorize and require you to return forthwith to Fiume or the neighbourhood thereof, and as soon after your arrival as possible take measures for securing as many of the said trees accordingly, as can be brought to Fiume thereby, and we recommend that you enter into a contract if possible for delivering the trees at Fiume to you on your order at a certain price per load but if Mr Adamich should not be willing to enter into a contract for this purpose and Mr Tommasine should still decline, and no other responsible person should offer, we do then authorize you to employ Mr Adamich to deliver at Fiume as many trees as he possibly can fit for H.M. Navy within one year from the time of your giving him the order, allowing him a reasonable commission for his trouble not exceeding 4 per cent upon the amount of his disbursement and advancing him within the year a sum not exceeding £5000 to enable him to procure horses and carriages for conveying the timber, and to erect stables on the road for the cattle.

In making the payments for this timber provided a contract cannot be entered into,<sup>1</sup> and you are under the necessity of employing Mr Adamich upon commission, you are at liberty to advance him a sufficient sum to enable him to pay down one fourth of their remaining value at the scale of

<sup>1</sup>The Navy Board's preferred system was publicly to advertise its requirements, awarding contracts, usually for one year, to the most satisfactory bidder. This was impossible in unexplored foreign areas. Then, an agent, such as Leard, was sent to examine timber, decide on its quality and buy it as cheaply as possible. The Board was bound to accept such material and the agent was paid on a commission basis usually 5 per cent on the purchase price plus expenses. Agents often had to employ local sub-agents, on commission, and monetary arrangements could become confused, hence the Board's insistence on exact, regular accounts. But there were inevitable miscalculations and delays, outside the Board's control.

one guinea for each tree, in order to secure the contract, but under the uncertainty of getting the timber out of that country at present, we think it right that the last should not be made until the timber is actually shipped for Malta, Gibraltar or some neutral state, in the hope that the subjects of the Emperor will thereby interest themselves to forward the exportation of it. For your guidance in procuring the most proper timber you will receive herewith two printed contracts, one for rough<sup>1</sup> the other for sided timber and you will conform to the dimensions therein as near as may be.

As it appears by your estimate for bringing trees from the forest of Sleaving near Carlstadt in Croatia to Fiume or Porto Re that including a commission of £5 per cent to Mr Adamich it may be delivered at £5.3.0 per load for 50 feet moderate size and something more for larger timber, we expect that this sum will not be exceeded, but that you will keep the expenses as much under that sum as possible and from the information of Mr Adamich as well as yourself, he will be able after one year's experience to make such observations and calculations of the expense attending this timber as will enable him to enter into a contract upon firm and certain terms for the future supply if it should be required; you are to observe that after this first year we shall not employ any person in procuring timber from these forests upon commission, but that a contract will be entered into, and whoever is the contractor we shall expect will take the horses, carriages and stables off our hands at a fair valuation unless you can adopt a better mode of getting rid of them.

As soon as sufficient quantity of the timber is ready for exportation, you will procure shipping for it to Ragusa or some other neutral state, upon the cheapest terms you can and send it from thence in neutral vessels if necessary to Malta, Gibraltar or England as you may hereafter be directed, but in case the new road should not be opened so soon as is expected, the timber is in that case to be conveyed to Carlstadt as soon as it is ready for carriage and there to be deposited until the road is opened.

For your trouble and pains in executing this concern, we shall allow you from the time you leave England a salary of £400 p.a. so long as you are employed hereon, and as an inducement to you to forward as much as is in your power the success of the undertaking we will also allow you four shillings per load upon the quantity of timber you ship in the course of next year, 1805, from Fiume or Porto Re, and two shillings, further pr. load upon the quantity delivered at Malta, Gibraltar or in England and in 1806 and afterwards three shillings per load upon the quantity shipped and one shilling further per load on the quantity delivered, and as these allowances will produce you a considerable sum, we rely with great

<sup>1</sup>Unbarked timber.

confidence upon your exertions not only to procure the best oak timber for us agreeable to the sizes we have pointed out, but that you will have a watchful eye over every person you employ, so that the expences and risk attending it, are kept as moderate as possible, observing always that altho' it is a great object with us to procure this timber for H.M. Navy, yet our further concerns with it must depend in a great measure upon the expence and risk and whether we can procure oak timber on better terms from other countries.

You will not fail to write to us by every opportunity with an account of your proceedings, and to point out to us as early as possible any difficulties you may foresee in the execution of this order so that the fleet in the Mediterranean may not be disappointed of this expected supply of timber.

The bills which you draw upon us are not to be at less than 30 days sight, always advising us when you draw, also of the premium you obtain upon your bills, and you will take care to procure such sufficient vouchers for every expence you incur that no difficulties may arise in passing your accounts. You are to send us every three months at furthest, copy of your account current, and deliver the vouchers as soon as the transaction is closed and you are to communicate frequently with His Majesty's minister at Vienna hereon.

In case you should hereafter find that the assistance of a shipwright will be useful in converting the timber one will be ordered out.<sup>1</sup>

## 6. *Navy Board review of a report by Mr Leard*

9 February 1810

Leard adverts to his letter of the 28th Oct. wherein he mentioned that it was his intention to proceed to the Coast of Albania, and states that he left Fiume on the 7th Nov. but that owing to contrary winds and bad weather he did not reach Durazzo [modern Durrës] on the coast of Albania till the 3rd Jany., where finding a considerable quantity of oak timber in the neighbourhood and having learnt that the Vizier Ali Pacha of Yanina was at Berati, he availed himself of the opportunity of sending him a letter respecting the political and military state of affairs, which led to certain conferences with him and with the Captain Pacha<sup>2</sup> of Croja and Tiranna, by which permission has been granted for the exportation of timber for

<sup>1</sup>A shipwright, Edward Churchill, first assistant to the master shipwright at Plymouth dockyard, 1803–13, was sent out with Leard. By 1817 he had become master shipwright at Plymouth. Morriss, *Royal Dockyards*, p. 163; BL, Add. Mss. 40, 400, Martin Papers, vol. iv, ff. 29 *et seq.*, 2 August 1817, Martin to Melville.

<sup>2</sup>The military commander.

H.M. Service ... [Leard estimated the mean cost of timber sided and delivered to the shipping place at £3 per load.]

He further states that it being the proper season for felling the timber<sup>1</sup> he immediately employed three companies of 25 men each to cut down the trees as fast as possible, and that he has thought it best while they are cutting and preparing the timber, to go to Malta and concert with Commissioner Frazer<sup>2</sup> on the best means of getting the timber away, and proceeding with the business with every effort possible.

It appears from the papers that Mr Leard transmitted that he visited the forest of Valdina about six miles from Durazzo and about 30 miles in extent, and that there is much crooked timber<sup>3</sup> in it, and in respect to the other forests he has mentioned,<sup>4</sup> he observes that the quantity and quality of the timber being such as to merit attention, he intended visiting them at a more favourable opportunity. It also appears from the same papers that Mr Leard obtained from the Captain Pacha the exclusive privilege of the exportation of timber for H.M. Service.

#### 7. *Memorandum, Copy, in Sir John Warren to Lord Liverpool*<sup>5</sup>

January 1803

Though it be easy to procure any quantity of timber, or of mast wood, it is not so to decide where the best is to be had, but by a perfect local knowledge. Great difference is observable in point of quality – according to the places of its growth. I risk but little in asserting that little or no good oak exists in Russia, within reach at least of acquirement without great difficulty. I can speak not only from ocular conviction, but from the best information that could be procured from experienced men. My father served this country fifty years as chief master builder,<sup>6</sup> to whose reputation in point of knowledge and veracity, I have no fear of appealing to the

<sup>1</sup>The winter season, when sap was low in trees, was thought the best time to fell timber and gave the best chance of preservation from the development of rot.

<sup>2</sup>Naval commissioner at Malta dockyard.

<sup>3</sup>The curved timbers forming the essential knees etc. of a warship.

<sup>4</sup>This was the ash tree forest of Issmo. Ash provided wood for oars, handspikes and capstan bars.

<sup>5</sup>Though unsigned this memorandum is probably by John Yeames the younger, in 1804 a partner in the firm of Forester and Yeames, St Petersburg, and British consul there.

<sup>6</sup>John Lambe Yeames (1707–87), father of the above, had had a long, distinguished career as shipbuilder in Russia from 1736. He was Catherine the Great's chief builder, working at Archangel and St Petersburg. Samuel Bentham considered him 'the great ship builder at St Petersburg, an Englishman but a thick head'. Anthony Cross, *By the Banks of the Neva, Chapters from the Lives and Careers of the British in Eighteenth Century Russia* (Cambridge, 1997), p. 180. For a portrait and further details, see *Country Life*, 11 February 1982, Collectors' Questions.

testimony of the three last ambassadors from Great Britain, and to many others of his countrymen here. M. Brun, a man of distinguished merit, formerly master builder in the French royal service, now in the Russian, will confirm this allegation, nor will any of the native builders that have been brought up in England, deny it, much less the naval officers. No ship on an average is fit for service above 12 years. Four or five ships of the first rate were condemned this and the last year, tho' the oldest was launched not above 15 years ago. Some have already been repairing while yet on the stocks, and which it was dangerous to launch, without it. The outward appearance of the oak is good, and apparently sound, but it is rarely so at the heart, and is besides very porous.

The great fleet on the Black Sea, is in a state of decay tho' built of the very best oak of the southern provinces. The galley or rowing fleet is in a miserable condition, tho it is eternally repairing.

The following prices are paid for oak, by the Admiralty of the Black Sea to the contractor Mr Leodovsky, who assures me he has very little profit. Mr Oucherlony, an English gentleman sacrificed an ample fortune of his own and materially hurt that of Count R, who was concerned in a speculation of the like nature.

Crooked wood	40–45 Cop[e]ks
Large wood less curved	40 Copks
Ditto still less	30 Copks    Pr. Pood or 36lb English
Strait pieces	20–30 Copks
Oak boards split not sawed	15 Copks
The whole has been lumped at times at 40 Copks.	

I passed through very extensive forests of oak but confess I was not struck with the size of the trees, nor did I perceive any great curves, or in any quantity.

It is certain that the coasts of Anatolia abound in the finest oak, as well as walnut wood, and very easy to be procured in barter against Crimean salt, which is exceedingly cheap. M. Brun above mentioned, was several years in the Turkish service, assures [*sic*] that their Navy '*Est la meilleure flotte materielle en Europe.*'

I have been assured by some engineers, sent to survey the Dniester, demolish some fortifications on it, and settle the frontiers, after the last peace, that they met with immense forests of oak and fir, in Galicia etc.<sup>1</sup> which could easily be floated down this River. The trees were of immense

<sup>1</sup>Galicia, part of Poland till the partition of 1795, then largely Austrian. In the partitions of 1783 and 1795 Russia had acquired the neighbouring territories of Volhynia and Podolsk/ Podolia, noted for fine timber.

size, and to be bought exceedingly cheap. I am apprehensive, that the timber of these countries, partakes of the nature and quality of that of Podolsk etc. and supposing the quality of the oak to be equal, it is certain, by all accounts, that timber could be procured cheaper from the Dniester or its neighbourhood, and floated down that river, at less expense to Odessa, even including a land carriage of 40 versts,<sup>1</sup> than could be had from the rivers in conflux with the Dnieper, and having it conveyed down that river to Kherson, both in consideration of a great difference of distance (independent of the price) as also that difficulty of navigation of the leman or estuary of the Dnieper, where ships are often detained for weeks, by contrary winds, by reason of its intricate passage, as well as by ice. It is asserted that the water carriage is practicable from the leman of the Dniester to Odessa during the summer, the distance being so trifling.

Though the quality of the oak in Russia be liable to objection, the mast wood to be procured through the Black Sea is beyond contradiction the finest in the world. It is to be had, both in Austria, as well as Russia, but great local knowledge is necessary to make a proper choice, which was my object to acquire. Some rivers are famous in furnishing the longest and thickest sticks, but brittle and coarse of grain; others produce them of less size, but more to be confided in: this I say of the rivers falling into the Dnieper. The Dniester offers an inexhaustible supply, and nearer at hand than from the Dnieper. The forests are in Galicia, and the wood may be bought very cheap, and pays a trifling duty. The finest masts are about 60 versts from the river, and are carried to it in winter at a trifling expence. The forests, not only of Galicia, but of Transylvania, Wallachia and Moldavia [modern Rumania] abound in oak and mast wood, of a superior quality, which may be conveyed thro' the Sert [modern Siretul] and other rivers, to the Danube. The Turks formerly got their masts through the southern mouth of this river, and the Admiralty of the Black Sea preferred 'some time ago fetching theirs from Kilia [modern Kiliya, Rumania] or the northern mouth of the Danube, instead of having them from the Dnieper.

Prince Katagusin, a Moldavian nobleman, described to me his country as replete with the finest forests, and gave me information from practical knowledge and experience, as having been contractor for furnishing timber for the construction of the different fortresses on this side of the Black Sea. He assures me that the coast around Trebisond [modern Trabzon] produces all kinds of timber for naval purposes and easily procured for salt.

<sup>1</sup>A verst is approximately two thirds of an English mile.

A trade so new, and on a coast so little explored, is certainly attended by danger, but I trust to procure men of experience and knowledge of those parts, that will not only render it practicable but that it will be attended by a double advantage; not only of procuring easily timber, copper etc. but of vending, particularly thro' the River Rione [modern Rioni, Georgia] many English manufactures, without the inconvenience attending their importation into Russia. The late Empress<sup>1</sup> sent a gentleman in the quality of a physician to the sovereigns of Georgia, Mingrelia [the region west of Krasnodar on the Black Sea], Guria [possibly the area south and east of Krasnodar, bordering the Caucasus mountains] etc. watered by the Rione, but I believe with quite different views and instructions. His account of these countries is very favourable to trade. Vast quantities of oak, walnut wood (the chief object of pursuit of the French) and many other valuable articles might be procured. The Rione is not above three days sail from Odessa, even in Greek vessels. This man, tho' possessed of sufficient property to live at ease, is willing to go to these countries and could be of infinite use, as knowing the people and the country and possessing most of the oriental languages.

The chief view of the French encouraging a mercantile establishment on the Black Sea is to procure naval stores, particularly curves of oak and walnut wood. A correspondence on this very subject, and on that of masts has been carried on, with the French minister of marine. They intend sending out men to examine and chuse masts they want, before they are shipped, and the same will be done in regard to the oak etc.

To the best of my knowledge and opinion it would be more for the interest and benefit of the British government to procure the oak and walnut wood from the Turkish territories and confine only a part of the supply of masts to the Dnieper. I am convinced that those procurable from the Dniester and Danube, would be better and cheaper.

When a proper braak<sup>2</sup> is established the Royal Navy could be supplied, from Kherson and Odessa on advantageous terms, with hemp, tallow etc. and the garrisons and fleet in the Mediterranean provided with salt beef as well as wheat at very reasonable rates.

<sup>1</sup>Catherine II, the Great.

<sup>2</sup>Braak is of Dutch derivation and here seems to mean a trade opening. Braakers were timber quality controllers who inspected, graded and marked the timber in all Baltic ports. They were chosen by the municipality and their word was final in the grading of timber. Braak or brack was also third-rate quality timber. In the Baltic, English merchants bought from Jewish traders who controlled the passage of timber from forest to port, organised its conversion and charged a commission, usually 3 per cent of the value. J. Patrick Green, 'An Archaeological Study of the 1830 Warehouses at Liverpool Road Station, Manchester', *Industrial Architectural Review*, xvii, 2, Spring, 1995, 117–28.

Should government think us worthy of being employed in its service, and we trust, our characters and reputation will bear the strictest scrutiny, we would make this our only object, and abandon every other view. In a trade so new, it is impossible to propose any terms but, we would leave government to settle them according to our services.

I hope that the assistance of some scientific young men (of each branch) in the choice of timber and masts would not be thought a superfluous article, to keep pace with the French. The only favour we beg at present is to have the speediest instructions.

8. *Issac Solly and Sons, London, to Navy Board*

11 July 1807

Honble. Sirs,

The regular and direct intercourse between this country and Dantzic [modern Gdansk] being interrupted,<sup>1</sup> it is necessary that we should apply to your Honble Board to enable us to adopt such measures as are left so as to procure the goods that we have contracted to deliver into his Majesty's stores.

We have to request therefore that you will procure us permission to import the following goods from Dantzic. Fir timber, fir deals, oak plank, oak staves and ash rafters, that licences may be granted for the following ships that we are about chartering for that purpose to proceed to Dantzic to load the above mentioned goods and deliver them either in the Port of London, Sheerness, Chatham, Portsmouth or Plymouth and that the necessary measures be adopted to prevent any interruption by the powers blockading the port provided that should that be the case and that instructions to this effect be sent out to the commanders of His Majesty's ships or those of his allies in that quarter.

The ships alluded to are as follows

*The Sophia*    Albert Schuter Master 203 tons of Bremen

*Aurora*        Carsten Bleer Master 211 tons of Oldenberg

*Einighent*    Heinrich Osjen Master 180 tons of Oldenberg

*Nautilus*     Joh. Hin. Schriever Master 300 tons of Bremen

<sup>1</sup>French victories over the combined Russian/Prussian forces at Jena (14 October 1806), Eylau, (8 February 1807) and Friedland (14 June 1807), and the resulting Treaty of Tilsit (7/9 July 1807), saw Prussia humiliated, her territory reduced and occupied by French troops until she paid a heavy indemnity. Dantzic, Prussia's principal port was besieged by the French from March to 27 May 1807. British merchants like Solly were hurrying to get their cargoes away under cover of neutrals, before confiscation by the French, or being stopped by British blockade.

9. *Scott, Idles and Co., London, to Navy Board*

6 October 1807

Honble. Sirs,

Having received His Majesty's licence for cutting timber in Canada, we think it most regular to transmit the same into your hands ... [Remarks about the form of the contract]

In what we have further to add we must hope for your honors indulgence in taking the liberty of adverting to a pledge you were pleased to give us at the time we concluded this contract, that pending its execution you would in no respect interfere in the market by accepting offers from other persons of Canada masts and timber, a strict adherence to which your honors will be sensible to be absolutely necessary to insure the legitimate supplies from us which we have engaged for, and which we foresee no difficulty in furnishing, when you peruse the subjoined extract of a letter we yesterday received from Quebec and which we refer to your consideration in the full reliance your honorable Board will not aid the opposition we are to encounter from Mr Usborne<sup>1</sup> by relieving him in this market, from the importation he is now making of the articles in question, a resource moreover of which we ourselves may profit should the public service require it, before the arrival of our own supplies.

*Extract from Messrs Mure and Joliffe to Scott, Idles and Co., Quebec  
21 Aug. 1807*

Mr Usborne talks of going next season still more extensively than ever into the mast and spar business and is attempting to throw every impediment in our way and has even endeavoured to prevent the ship builders engaging with us. We therefore hope you will furnish us without delay with full powers not only to cut timber ourselves, but to prevent others from doing it to our prejudice.

<sup>1</sup>Usborne and Co. were established timber merchants in the Canada timber business since 1801.

10. *Woolwich Dockyard Shipwrights to Navy Board*

9 March 1805

Honble. Sirs

In reply to your letter of 22nd ulto. we beg leave to acquaint you, that ye several kinds of timber delivered at this yard from the *Glatton* brought from Botany Bay, were Black Gum, Blue Gum, Iron Bark, Stringy Bark, Mahogany and Lignum Vitae, all of which are of nearly the same texture (except the Lignum Vitae which is not of so hard a quality as the others). We observe that it is all liable to split, and rent [*sic*], by being exposed to the sun and air, and therefore it should, as far as is practicable be used without reducing it to small scantlings, some of the wood called Box wood, being straight, has been used for orlop pillars for the *Ocean*,<sup>1</sup> which appears very proper for the purpose. The several kinds of wood may be used for the frames of ships etc. as the greater part of it is compass,<sup>2</sup> and as we have no doubt of its desirability, we are of opinion the importation of it may answer the intention of government particularly at this time when the present scarcity of oak timber of the growth of this country may render it necessary.

We are  
Honble. Sirs,  
Your most obedient Servants

Ed. Sison, John Knowles, W.Sture.<sup>3</sup>11. *Navy Board to William Marsden*<sup>4</sup>

7 March 1806

'Having taken into consideration the letters from Mr. Grenville and Mr. Briscoe transmitted with yours of the 30th ult. together with the proposal of

<sup>1</sup>HMS *Ocean* launched 24 October 1805. D. Lyon, *The Sailing Navy List 1688–1870* (London, 1993), p. 105.

<sup>2</sup>Compass timbers were the great curved timbers for the main frames of ships.

<sup>3</sup>Edward Sison, master shipwright, 1801–16; previously master shipwright at Plymouth 1793–95, at Chatham 1795–1801; John Knowles, first assistant to the master shipwright 1803–14 and from 1801 timber master, previously first assistant at Sheerness 1796–97, second assistant at Woolwich 1797–1803; William Sture, second assistant to the master shipwright 1803–19 and master caulker, though the post lapsed in 1801. Morriss, *Royal Dockyards*, pp. 158, 159, 160, 163.

<sup>4</sup>William Marsden, second secretary to the Admiralty 1795–Jan. 1804, first secretary Jan. 1804–Jan. 1807. J. C. Sainty, *Office Holders in Modern Britain IV, Admiralty Officials 1660–1870* (London, 1975), p. 139.

the latter to supply teak timber for the use of the dockyard at Milford Haven<sup>1</sup> from Bombay. We beg leave to report our opinion on the subject as follows.

In the first place we requested to draw their Lordships attention to the letter of the Court of Directors to their Lordships, in which it will appear that the governor and naval superintendent of Bombay assure the East India Company that notwithstanding their best endeavours to comply with the directions of the Council of Directors to build a 74 gun ship and a frigate for the navy according to the draughts furnished for that purpose, it has not been in their power to provide on the whole coast of Malabar, teak timber of a sufficient scantling for floor timbers and first futtocks for the 74 gun ship, but that the frigate should be immediately built, (and which was accordingly done) but that they could not attempt to go on with the 74 unless the Navy Board would point out what substitute might be used for teak timber in those parts, or consent to have the timbers considerably decreased in their size ... and as by the last accounts we have received from thence no progress has been made in building the ship notwithstanding the reduction proposed, the presumption is that timber for the frame even of the reduced size has not been [able] to be procured.

For having conversed with various persons on the subject of teak timber on the coast of Malabar we are led to believe that ships built of the timber of that coast are of longer duration than if constructed of the timber of any other part of India. However the country about Bombay affords very little, and what is used there is brought from a distance and chiefly from Cochin from the banks of several great rivers which empty themselves into the sea at the south of that harbour where there is about 15 or 16 feet of water. At that place teak timber for building frigates may be had at an easy rate, but large timber is too scarce even there for forming the least expectation of a supply of it from thence, so that if frigate timber were any great object, and the price of freight could be made moderate, Cochin would be the proper port to embark it from, as the cost of the article is near double when brought to Bombay.

We likewise beg leave to bring to their Lordships recollection, the naval establishment now forming at Prince of Wales island [modern Penang, Malay Peninsula] under the direction of Mr Philip Dundas<sup>2</sup> the governor

<sup>1</sup>A small private yard at Milford Haven built ships for the Admiralty from 1797, but its bankruptcy forced the Admiralty to take it over from 1800. It was more formally established from 1809 when it became a royal dockyard, but the Navy Board was always concerned to restrict its scale and prevent the major yards being deprived of shipwrights and timber. In 1813 it was moved to Pembroke Dock.

<sup>2</sup>A permanent settlement was established at Prince of Wales Island in 1787, but it was off the main trade routes and the more promising site at Singapore was developed from 1819. Penang closed in the early 1820s. Philip Dundas was one of the extensive Dundas family who supplied so many Scottish administrators, lawyers etc. to Scotland and India.

who in his letters to Lord Melville states that he is of opinion the coast of Malabar will not furnish timber of sufficient scantlings for 74 gun ships, but that the great river Ava [possibly the Irrawaddy] in the Kingdom of Pegu [Burma] contains an inexhaustible mine of the finest timber for ship building in general.

His project goes not only to build ships with that timber in aid of what may be cut down on Prince of Wales island, and in its neighbourhood but also to make a deposit of converted timber on the spot which may hereafter be brought to England at any convenient opportunity.

Mr. Dundas' opinion is corroborated by Major Symes' history of his embassy to the king of Pegu<sup>1</sup> as to the plenty and cheapness of the timber on the river Ava. How far it might be consistent with the rules of the E.I.C.<sup>2</sup> to give an exclusive right as suggested by Mr. Grenville for certain ships to load for their settlements in India at an out port of this kingdom when it is understood great pains are taken in the river Thames to prevent certain articles being exported prejudicial to their own separate commerce, we cannot possibly judge of; nor do we conceive any advantage likely to accrue to His Majesty's ships by confining the importation of timber to Milford Haven.

Upon the whole we do not see that any benefit can arise from Mr. Briscoe's plan, but as he is going out in a civil capacity to Bombay he may be desired to inform himself of all the resources for large timber which that coast affords together with the price of each article when brought to that market, and as he may also see the molding and conversion of every piece of timber from the drawings sent out, he may then better inform himself of the actual tonnage required for certain parts of a ship's frame, and learn at what rate freight can be procured for it, so as to put both himself and us on a certainty as to price as well as extent of supply.

A project was some time ago submitted on this head which appeared to us to have been well understood and had it been carried into execution we should have had by this time a considerable quantity of teak timber in all the dockyards. The proposal was this, viz. that a deposit of teak timber should be made at the expense of the Crown at every port where a homeward bound E I man should load, and as every ship according to her cargo requires more or less dunnage she should (by compact with the

<sup>1</sup>Michael Symes (1753?–1809), served in India from 1788, promoted a lieutenant-colonel in 1800. In 1795 he was sent by the governor general, Sir John Shore, on a mission to Burma during which he obtained the emperor of Ava's order permitting a British agent to live at Rangoon to protect British interests there, and wrote an account of his experiences, *An Account of an Embassy to the Kingdom of Ava sent by the Governor General of India in 1795* (London, 1800). There was a second mission in 1802.

<sup>2</sup>EIC – East India Company.

I C) be obliged to take in for dunnage a small quantity of teak timber so as not materially to interfere with her general stowage. [See Doc. 4.]

How this project came to fall to the ground does not appear but the subject is now brought forward to their Lordships view, in case in their wisdom they should deem it proper to revise it.

We are

Sir

Your very humble servants

H. Duncan J. Henslow H. Legge<sup>1</sup>

Undated Admiralty minute: Not worth importing teak to Milford.

## 12. *Memorandum by Sir T. B. Martin*

7 December 1816

Timber.

The procuring of timber for the naval service without trespassing upon what is now standing in Great Britain is a subject of the highest national importance, and cannot be considered with too much attention, for if, now in a moment of general peace, we are consuming our home resources, it is impossible to calculate upon the expense, inconvenience and danger we may be exposed to in the event of a general war. I therefore venture to submit to consideration the following observations.

The Austrian government having some time since obtained a loan from this country and concluding that it will not be practicable for them to repay it in cash, it is presumed that an arrangement may be made for liquidating part of the debts by their supplying annually a quantity of oak timber from the forests most contiguous to Venice where it may be shipped with facility, and without any other expense to England than its conveyance home leaving it to the Austrian government to fell and draw to that port under the superintendence of such person as may be deemed most competent to point out the timber fit for naval purposes,\* and 'tis well known that the size and quality in that part of the world is the best that can be procured. An arrangement to this effect would enable us to reduce the navy estimates to the amount of the quantity of timber annually

<sup>1</sup>Henry Duncan, deputy controller 1801–06; John Henslow, surveyor 1784–1806, knighted in 1793; Hon. Henry Legge, commissioner 1804–29, controller 1829–30. J. M. Collinge, *Office Holders in Modern Britain VII, Navy Board Officials 1660–1832* (London, 1978), pp. 98, 110, 118.

received, so that without actually drawing from the public purse we shall be providing material of such a quality as to secure to us a number of sound and durable ships.

But important as the question is upon the foregoing grounds, the proposal embraces other advantages by putting down a sort of monopoly which has given to a few individuals in this country a power that leaves the public much at their mercy. There is however no point of view in which the subject can be considered with more interest than as it regards the home stock of timber, which is now falling under the axe of our contractors in all parts of the kingdom, and if pursued to the extent that our wants will from time to time require, a few years will leave us to the chance of foreign markets, and without any stock at home if a general war should shut us out from other resources, so that if no other objects were to be attained by procuring timber in the manner proposed, this alone, it is presumed would be enough to claim the most earnest attention of H.M. government, as a matter of the very highest national importance.

That the timber of this country should have some years respite from the hands of the contractors cannot be disputed, and it is a melancholy reflection that those persons are now under engagements with the Navy Board to produce no less than 77,500 loads of British oak before the termination of 1818 in completion of contracts to supply 140,000 loads.

\* This proved erroneous; the quality of the timber in the *Adriatic* at least in Dalmatia is *very far from good*. The timber in the Tuscan and Roman states is *excellent*.<sup>1</sup>

### 13. Sir T. B. Martin to Lord Melville

2 August 1817<sup>2</sup>

The near termination of the contract which the Navy Board entered into in 1816 for the supply of English oak timber for the contractors of His Majesty's ships makes it indispensably necessary that immediate arrangements should be made for procuring a quantity of timber to keep up an ample store, equal to three years consumption, and after that to ensure a supply to meet the expenditure of each year.

The present state of the store of oak timber is as follows

<sup>1</sup>This note is written in a different hand and seems to be of a later date.

<sup>2</sup>This date is most likely that on which the memo was received, whereas that given at the end (15 July 1817) is the one on which it was written.

viz. in the yards –	96,863 loads
due on contracts –	46,374 loads
Total	143,237 loads

The annual consumption of oak timber is about 54,000 loads.

In the paper I delivered to Lord Melville on the 2nd Dec. 1816 ... I ventured to suggest the advantage of procuring timber from the Austrian government, not only from the known superiority of the timber in the Imperial states, but because it afforded a prospect of getting it on reasonable terms by making it the means of liquidating part of the debt of Austria to this country.

Since writing the paper alluded to, I have read a voluminous correspondence between the Navy Board and Mr Leard who was employed by them to procure a supply of timber in the neighbourhood of Trieste and Fiume and subsequently in Albania, and I have the satisfaction to state that the means of the Austrian government to afford an ample supply from the Imperial forests is removed beyond all doubt, not merely from the personal inspection of Mr Leard but on the authority of Mr Churchill, the present master shipwright at Plymouth dock yard, who was sent by the Board to assist Mr Leard in his inspection of the quality of the timber.

It is also shown in the correspondence of Mr Leard that the Austrian government has been perfectly willing to dispose of its timber at a reasonable price, making it a source of public revenue, and to this effect a decree was issued ... granting a supply of timber for five successive years in consequence of a memorial from Mr Adamich a merchant of Fiume employed by Mr Leard on behalf of the Navy Board.

It appears from the report of Messrs. Leard and Churchill that the Imperial forests are divided into what they term regiments, and that altho' a vast portion of the forests is private property, yet the government has a right to all timber fit for the construction of large ships, and at the period of their report, 50,000 trees of that description had been marked for cutting.

Without making a detailed comparison of the price paid for British oak timber at present, when we are in a state of profound peace, and that for which the timber of Croatia could have been procured in 1804 and subsequently during a period of war, it may be enough for the present purpose to show, as I shall hereafter, that by the means proposed of resorting to foreign aid, a saving will accrue which it is presumed will justify the earnest manner in which I am desirous to press the subject upon Lord Melville's attention, and this too without further reference to the advantage of sparing the British oak for those times when we may be shut

out from the foreign supply, to say nothing of the preferable quality of the timber of the Adriatic which would tend so much to the establishment of a durable fleet.

At the time alluded to the conveyance of timber from the forests to the port of shipping was attended with vast expense and great difficulty, but this is no longer an objection, for since then authentic information has been received of a new road having been made from Carlstadt the most distant part, to a place called Broad – and the Culpa [modern Kulpa] river leading from that place to Fiume has been rendered more conveniently navigable. It may therefore fairly be inferred that the expense of carrying the timber to the coast, an object of importance in a concern of this magnitude, is much diminished.

The price now paid for British oak is £14.1.4 pr. load, exclusive of carriage allowances and altho' so high, from all I can collect from our contractor, Mr. Morrice,<sup>1</sup> there is no probability of an abatement, on the contrary, he has put into my hands a letter from a nobleman, dated only the beginning of this month, who states that he must have an increase of £1.5.0 pr. load beyond the price of last year or his timber shall be withheld.

If then it shall be deemed advisable to apply to the Austrian government to enter into the proposed accommodation, I would take the liberty to offer the following suggestions as to the nature of the proposal, as relating to the allowance to be made to that government, for the value of the timber. It is not to be supposed that the Austrian government would be at any expense for the mere satisfaction of discharging any part of the debt. I should therefore recommend that in our treaty we should make that government the following allowance.

In the first place however, it should be stipulated that 150,000 loads of sided timber of large dimensions fit for the navy, should be delivered in three years. That for each load (containing 50 cubic feet) of sided timber, to be topped, sided and approved by a shipwright to be sent out, which shall be delivered at the port and place of shipment, there shall be paid the sum of £3.\*

That payment shall not be made for any quantity to [be] delivered under 5000 loads, when upon the agent's certificate payments shall be made by bills or otherwise by the Navy Board as the state of the exchange may render advisable, and further that for every sum so paid a sum in the proportion of two thirds of the amount of the former shall likewise be

<sup>1</sup>John Morrice or Morris, one time agent, then junior partner of Larking and Bowsher. He was the Navy's chief timber contractor from 1817 to his death in 1848. Albion, *Forests and Sea Power*, pp. 59–60.

struck off the Austrian debt so that on the completion of a supply of 150,000 loads of timber the Austrian government will receive

In back payments	£450,000
In liquidation of debt	£300,000
	<u>£750,000</u>

being at the rate of £5 pr. load viz. £3\*\* pr. load cash [and] payment £2 pr. load liquidation of debt and as a further inducement, I would recommend that a bonus of £10,000 should be paid in cash, provided 50,000 loads are actually delivered in each year, to be paid on the completion of the delivery of the year's proportion.

To the rate of £3 pr. load above proposed, to be paid in cash must be added the expense of shipping, about £2 pr. load and of freight, about £6 pr. load, making a total of £11 pr. load or £1,650,000 for the whole quantity. Whereas if this plan is not adopted and we are consequently obliged to seek our supplies at home, the cost of an equal quantity *and which we must have*, will be £2,108,000, so that the saving to be effected by the former method will amount to £458,000.\*\*\*

What is here stated is a mere outline of the scheme, sufficient perhaps for the basis of any instruction which it may be thought expedient to give to H.M. ministers in Vienna, but it will be essential to the success of the proposal that a person thoroughly acquainted with all that has passed in reference to the former transactions of the Board relating to Adriatic timber, should be despatched to Vienna and from thence proceed to the place where the timber is to be had, with such person as may be appointed by the Austrian government to give effect to the arrangement.

It is impossible to name any person more completely qualified for this undertaking than Mr Smith, the assistant secretary to the Navy Board, who is most minutely acquainted with the subject in all its bearings, and besides the advantage of a perfect knowledge of the practice of the Board in regard to all contracts, payments etc., he is fully aware of the imposition to which they have been often exposed in their dealings with foreigners – and I will pledge myself that his most strict integrity, his active, energetic and earnest desire to promote the public good will ensure the greatest advantage from his being so employed and I would therefore strongly recommend that Mr Smith should be authorised to proceed to Vienna, furnished with an introduction to the protection and assistance of H.M. ministers at that court, such as may best tend to give effect to the object of his mission, and that he should also have a general letter to the ministers and consuls in Italy and the ports of the Adriatic, and that in other respects, he should act under such instructions as he may receive from the Board.

If the proposal which I have ventured to submit relating to an arrangement with the Austrian government should be rejected, I would still submit that Mr Smith, with a competent shipwright should proceed to Venice, Italy, Trieste and other ports to make the best arrangements he can for procuring timber and recovering that which was paid for some years ago, and is still represented as lying in the forest at Carlstadt in good condition.

In conclusion I must again beg leave to express my hope that the subject of this paper may be decided upon as soon as possible as the time is fully arrived for entering into engagements for a further supply of timber. Besides husbanding our own stock of timber and the great saving which it is expected may be made, and the satisfaction of taking such an advantageous means of liquidating part of the Austrian debt, it is no small consideration that this proposal has the further advantage of giving considerable help to the shipping interest (now so much depressed) and also of giving employment to a number of British seamen.

I must also add that the measure I have felt it necessary to recommend is most fully justified by the enquiries made by the commissioners of land revenue and the commissioners of revision upon the subject of the timber in this country and our foreign resources, and that it is particularly sanctioned by the latter in their 14th report.

It is highly necessary and desirable that this transaction should be conducted with the utmost secrecy so that our views may not be counteracted by the French and other agents who are now procuring timber in Tuscany and Italy.

Navy Office 15 July 1817.

\* It may be very possible to obtain it at a less price. T.B.M.

\*\* This proposal which places the expense in the worst light should be reversed in entering upon a negotiation and only adopted in case of a determined objection on the part of the Austrian government.

\*\*\* A large proportion of this sum will be paid in duties upon the importation of timber, but it is equally a gain to the public.

#### 14. *Sir T. B. Martin to Lord Melville*

29 October 1817

My Lord,

I have the satisfaction to acquaint your lordship that the object of Mr Smith's journey to Fiume and that neighbourhood, has been productive

of advantages to the public interest almost exceeding what I stated to your lordship as possible to be obtained and greatly beyond anything my best expectations could anticipate, and which I attribute to the diligent earnest and able manner in which Mr Smith has fulfilled his instructions.

In the first place I should state to your lordship that we have recovered a debt of £8,027, which had been long considered at this board as beyond the reach of recovery. And Mr Smith has with great promptitude and judgement availed himself of a fair opening which the adjustment of this debt gave him of entering into a provisional contract, subject to the approbation of this board, for 20,000 loads of oak timber of a most desirable and superior quality, and which contract being highly advantageous, I shall immediately recommend to the board as proper to be ratified with some few alterations as to the periods of payment.

This contract is most cautiously drawn up by Mr Smith and accords with the instructions he had received. The leading and material features of it are as follows, namely – 20,000 loads of oak timber according to prescribed dimensions are to be delivered by the 31 Dec. 1820 at £12 per load; the first payment on which at the rate of £7 per load is to be made on the arrival of the timber at the shipping place and the remainder on its being delivered at either of His Majesty's dockyards in England so that the public will not be burthened with the expense or risk of freighting it home.

Mr Smith was instructed to make it a condition of every contract that British ships should be freighted in preference to those of any other nation and this forms a positive clause in the contract and I entertain a confidential expectation that the shipping interest will derive considerable benefit from this transaction, and also our manufacturers as it will be the means of establishing an active intercourse between this country and Fiume.

Mr Smith has very properly sent Mr Gill to England and the report of this shipwright officer as to the quality of the timber is in the highest degree satisfactory.

The price paid for British oak timber at present is £14.1.6. per load to which should be added 10/- per load for carriage expenses, making for 20,000 loads the total sum of £291,500. Whereas for an equal quantity of timber of a better quality which is now contracted for, the whole expense will be £240,000, making a saving of upwards of £51,000.

I have now to call your lordship's attention to an important statement respecting a quantity of timber at Venice belonging to the Austrian government, the quality and size of which is admirably calculated for our naval purposes and I have reason to believe there will not be any difficulty in prevailing upon the Austrian government to part with it on very

reasonable terms such as will be satisfactory to that govt. and produce, I should hope at least a saving of one half the value to us.

I therefore beg to submit to your lordship's consideration the expediency of making a direct application to the Austrian government for the purchase of the timber in question, which is particularly described in the accompanying paper from Mr Gill,<sup>1</sup> and I would propose that in this negotiation the principle suggested in my former papers should be so far acted upon as to keep in sight the enormous debt of Austria to this country, so as to make it an argument for its more ready compliance with the request and in that case I should simply recommend that it be proposed to give a certain sum per load, say £2 for the timber including the ships on the stocks.

To give effect to any such measure it is highly desirable that Mr Smith should be co-operated with and that therefore he should proceed to Vienna in order to afford His Majesty's minister at that place such information as his knowledge of the circumstances and experience may enable him to furnish, and if this is approved, your lordship will no doubt see the propriety of making all proceedings, upon the subject as secret as possible, with a view to the ulterior steps which it may be proper to take upon my former suggestions, and under that impression I beg to suggest that the transactions should not be conducted under the board at large but that conformably to the Order in Council establishing the Fourth Report of the Board of Naval Revision your lordship would empower me to conduct the business as a 'secret service'.

In conclusion I beg leave to assure your lordship that an early decision is highly necessary to prevent Mr Smith remaining idle and the detention of Mr Gill in this country as the felling season has already arrived which renders the presence of the latter upon the spot immediately requisite.

### 15. *Sir T. B. Martin to Lord Melville*

8 July 1819

*[After reviewing the current work in the dockyards and reminding ministers that the current fleet, though fit for service, was in need of repair, Martin continued:]*

<sup>1</sup>Gill's report, 15 September 1817 is at ff. 43v–4 in BL. Add. Ms. 41394. He declared the timber in store, c.200 loads of thickstuff and c. 6000–7000 ends of sided oak, from Istria, well seasoned and worth having; that the ships being built could be taken apart and frigates built from the timbers. There were three line of battle ships and four frigates in frame and unfinished, built of seasoned, valuable timber.

Owing to the hurried manner in which ships were built to meet the exigencies of the late war it would be difficult to state the enormous sums lost to the public from their quick decay but that it amounts to several millions I may assert without hazard of contradiction and should there be any suspension or diminished rate of the work in the building or repairing now going forward as it is upon a limited scale, the same evil would be felt in the event of war; while on the other hand if we are at peace for a few years and the work goes on, the ships will be gradually brought into such a state by building and repairing under cover and using only choice materials, and giving them full seasoning in the progress of repair, that we shall have for the *first time* a really sound and desirable fleet, to the sure saving of enormous sums of money.

Under a conviction of the extreme importance of using the present moment of peace with all possible diligence in the repair of the fleet and in providing a suitable supply of timber and hemp, I venture to recommend those objects as much more worthy of the public expenditure than any improvements in new works in the yards, and if it should be the pleasure of government to limit the naval grants for 1819 to £6,000,000 only the new works must be stopped, or a very considerable reduction take place in the several establishments and in the purchase of timber and hemp.

With a further view to economy and at the same time to provide such an adequate store of timber as may be equal to three years consumption, and in the hope of bringing down the price in the British markets, the Navy Board have entered into foreign engagements to a considerable extent and so much to the public advantage that they have at this time authorized their agent to procure a much larger quantity at the rate of £10 and £11 instead of obtaining the whole of the annual supply at home at £14 and £15 pr. load and while it is to be had so cheap from abroad it is thought expedient not only to provide for our wants within the year, but also to increase the store.

The state of the timber in England has lately been the subject of my most serious attention, and although the actual quantity in the country may be considerable, I am convinced it is highly desirable to seek foreign supplies in order to check the exorbitant demands of the great timber growers and to prevent too large a consumption at home while foreign resources are open to us, and it is only by having an ample store that we can hereafter appear in the British market in less necessitous circumstances and consequently less at the mercy of the timber growers.

In former times on several occasions and even in the late war a deficiency of timber in the King's yards gave rise to much alarm and a great outcry against those whose duty it is to attend to that important object, and in the year 1776 the Navy Board received positive orders to

keep three years consumption constantly in hand and this order has been often repeated, and strongly approved by the Commissioners of Naval Revision,<sup>1</sup> but from various circumstances, and chiefly I think, of not availing ourselves of fit times for obtaining foreign supplies, this order has never been fulfilled, and even so late as the year 1807, the Navy Board in reply to a reproachful letter from the Admiralty state that their exertions had been unremitting but still they despaired of being able to accomplish the object. [Remarks on supplies of hemp follow]

There are several other articles of stores which, on account of the provision made for a continuance of the war, were not necessary to be purchased for the first two years of peace, but the wants of 120 sail of ships and vessels now in commission besides revenue vessels will henceforth require an annual supply.

16. *Sir T. B. Martin to Mr Cuming at Riga*

28 May 1818

After so long a silence you will think that I am acting but a shabby part to make public business an excuse for troubling you, but I know that altho' absent from old England, no man has a greater love for our dear little island than yourself, nor is there any one to whom I would write so freely upon any confidential matter relating to the interests of the country.

We have hitherto been too much in the hands of a few individuals in procuring Riga masts, and it occurs to me that it would be well worth the attention of some gentlemen at that place to direct their agents to give in tenders for such articles, the particulars of which and the terms of our contracts shall be sent herewith, and you will oblige me by ascertaining at what rate masts etc. of the description mentioned could with fair profits to the merchants, be landed in our dockyards. This is a subject upon which I am very earnest, and shall be most thankful for any information you can be good enough to give me at *an early period*, as I shall endeavour to delay entering into any engagements until I am favoured with your answer. If we find much difficulty in obtaining supplies from Riga upon reasonable terms, Virginia promises a good market and indeed we have already

<sup>1</sup>The Commission of Naval Revision (January 1805–March 1808) was established to revise the instructions governing all the civil naval departments, to consider the reports of earlier commissions, on fees, abuses etc. and carry out their recommendations. Its reports met with varying success. That on the timber situation was not published though timber plantations were created according to its recommendations. Morriss, *The Royal Dockyards*, pp. 194–205; *Naval Power and Culture 1760–1850*, pp. 172–4 *et seq.*

contracted for a quantity from that quarter, but not yet to an extent equal to our annual wants. I will beg the favour of you to make this enquiry without allowing it to be known from whence it originates. Solly and Sons are the people who in a great degree monopolize this supply.

17. *Sir T. B. Martin to Mr Downie, HMS Coromandel*,<sup>1</sup> *Portsmouth*

29 September 1819

Sir,

A quantity of medals and ribbons, with other articles of finery will be committed to your charge for the purpose of bartering with the natives of New Zealand, and I wish most strictly to caution you to use the utmost discrimination in your disposal of these articles, and to part with them to none but *Chiefs* and in so doing, on all occasions to avail yourself of the advice of the missionaries at the Bay of Islands, as to those among the natives with whom it would be most advisable and advantageous to treat. I take this opportunity of very earnestly impressing upon you the necessity of giving the fullest consideration to the business of bartering your commodities for masts, from which you will not fail to perceive how much depends upon the preservation of good faith, and the absolute necessity of being cautious and circumspect in your dealings, so as never, on any occasion, to give the natives reason for suspicion, or incline them to make extortionate demands; and it is better even to bring back part of the presents you are carrying out, than to teach the natives by any profuse or unguarded expenditure to raise their demands hereafter – and you must see, in making your arrangements for a barter, that you make a full and ample provision.

<sup>1</sup>HMS *Coromandel*, originally HMS *Malabar*, built Calcutta 1798 as an East Indiaman, bought into the Royal Navy 1804, became a storeship 1808, renamed *Coromandel* 1815. In 1819 she became a convict ship and was broken up in 1853. D. Lyon, *The Sailing Navy List 1688–1860* (London, 1993), p. 270.

18. *Sir T. B. Martin to Governor MacQuarrie*<sup>1</sup>

30 July 1819

Sir,

I take the liberty of addressing a letter to you for the purpose of requesting you to afford Mr Skinner the commander of the *Dromedary*<sup>2</sup> any assistance or information he may be in need of with a view to the accomplishment of the very important public service which he is directed to proceed upon after landing the convicts at Port Jackson.

Mr Skinner is instructed to go with as little delay as possible to New Zealand to procure a supply of pine trees of a size and quality suitable for the topmasts of line of battle ships, and from all that I hear respecting the trees upon that island I am led to believe that the white pine is such as would answer our purpose, but at this distance and with the imperfect knowledge we have of the timber in that quarter, it is undoubtedly but a speculative voyage, though, at the same time, one in the highest degree interesting to the naval service; and in saying this much I feel confident that I say enough to secure your assistance and protection in any manner that may facilitate the great object which I have stated.

Will you permit me to say that I should feel extremely gratified and obliged to you if you will do me the favour to direct any information to be collected for me respecting the timber of Van Diemens Land and other places within the scope of your Excellency's government as it would serve very materially to regulate our future proceedings, and I particularly mention Van Diemens Land as I am told that mahogany and cedar is to be found there in great abundance and of a size well suited for naval purposes, for we shall be glad to obtain occasional supplies of such timber as well as masts.

If you will allow me to place in your hands the following questions for the guidance of those who may be considered most competent to afford the information, it may perhaps prevent any difficulty or doubt as to the nature of the information which I consider desirable: viz 1. Name of the wood 2. General dimensions 3. Price 4. Its character for durability 5. If to be obtained in any large quantity 6. The distance of the forests from

<sup>1</sup>Lachlan MacQuarrie, governor of New South Wales from 1809 when he assumed the governorship in succession to William Bligh who had been deposed by the New South Wales Corps. MacQuarrie visited Van Diemens Land first in 1811 and again in 1821. Created a major general in 1813 he was governor general until 1821 and died in 1824.

<sup>2</sup>HMS *Dromedary*, built 1799 Bombay as the East Indiaman *Kaikusroo*, bought into the navy as the frigate HMS *Howe* in 1805, from 1808 served as the *Howe* store ship, hulked 1819, sold in 1864. Lyon, *Sailing Navy List*, p. 284.

any sheltered and convenient port for the shipping of timber: the name of such port and if it is capable of receiving a ship of 1000 tons. 7. Means of conveying the timber to the coast either by rivers or roads 8. If the forests belong to the King.

I cannot omit this opportunity of expressing my apprehension that some speculative persons will endeavour to possess themselves of lands where the best timber may be had, in anticipation of its being found expedient to draw large supplies from the colonies, by means of the returning convict ships, and certainly, it may prove advantageous both to the colony and the mother country; but I am quite sure if we should ever be reduced to the necessity of procuring timber through the audience of individuals, their high demands will soon turn us from such a source of supply and oblige us to look elsewhere. I therefore most earnestly hope that the timber districts will not pass into the hands of private persons but that some arrangement may hereafter be made for employing the convicts to fell and convey the timber to the coast if mahogany and cedar or any other sort suited to our wants should be found in sufficient quantity to afford a supply of 10 or 20,000 loads per annum. These are points however that must remain for the consideration of the secretary of state, whenever we ascertain that timber can be had.

I have desired the commander of the *Dromedary* to show you his orders by which, and from what I have told him verbally, your Excellency will learn that it is an object of the *first* importance that we should procure a *large* supply of topmasts, and I only regret that there is some doubt as to their goodness in New Zealand, and those of Norfolk island are known to be bad.<sup>1</sup> Mr Skinner will make every exertion to get at such as may answer, but in case of failure I have desired him to leave the letters with the missionary at the Bay of Islands for the information and guidance of the commander of another store ship (the *Coromandel*) which it is intended shall follow with similar orders to those given to Mr Skinner; but it would be a great accommodation and prevent much loss of time if you would have the goodness to allow the *Colonial* brig to go with or follow the *Dromedary* to New Zealand, to bring back a report of the masts to meet the *Coromandel* on her arrival at Port Jackson.

<sup>1</sup>The Norfolk Island pine, from its height and straight growth, looked promising as mast timber, but proved brittle and unsuitable.

19. *Sir Thomas Byam Martin to Sir Jahleel Brenton*<sup>1</sup>

4 August 1819

... It is truly unfortunate that the stinkwood has turned out so entirely unfit for naval purposes, but so it is – and we have failed of finding any mode of applying it except by cutting it into thick plank for portholes in fitting the convict ships. At one time there was an expectation that as the heart only was generally defective, it might be cut with advantage into thickstuff by taking the two sides of each log and throwing away the middle but it did not answer.

The specimens sent home in the *Fowey*, not the *Trincomalee*<sup>2</sup> as mentioned in your letter to me of the 29th, have a very sound appearance; but as your official letter of 11 Jany. last mentions having taken those pieces from a wharf which was constantly exposed to the surf, may we not fairly attribute its preservation to the effect of salt water – to me this appears evident, and if after siding the stinkwood timber, it is immersed for four or six months, and then allowed to stand under cover but not in a current of air, I think you might then give us a proof that by such a process the stinkwood may really be brought to good account, but under the present unfavourable report from each yard where the wood has been landed I can scarcely feel justified in recommending a ship of any description to be built on the Knysna, but if we can prove that it is capable of being made a durable timber, I shall have no objection to urge the experiment, and in that case, a good man shall be sent out to follow your directions.

There is an excellent, able, active person (Mr Edy)<sup>3</sup> now at Cochin on the Malabar coast, where we wish to build some small frigates, but as far as we can judge from his first report, there is but little prospect of success, and I am sure such a man would give you great satisfaction. In the event of your having authority at any future time to build a frigate of 28 guns, are the colonial shipwrights equal to such a work under the direction of your people, or what additional strength should you require? ...

<sup>1</sup>Sir Jahleel Brenton (1770–1844), VA. He had been commissioner of the dockyard at Port Mahon 1813–15 and on its closure became commissioner of the yard at the Cape until it too was closed in 1821.

<sup>2</sup>*Fowey*, not listed in Lyon, *Sailing Navy List* after 1806, a possible error for *Towey*, a 26-gun sloop, launched at Buckler's Hard 1817, *Ibid.*, p. 132. HMS *Trincomalee* (38), built Bombay, of teak, launched 1817; still afloat, now restored and preserved at West Hartlepool.

<sup>3</sup>John Edye, shipwright, later assistant surveyor to the Navy 1832–48.

20. *An Account of the Cost of the Stores Agreed for the Year 1831  
Including Those Due on Contract, Navy Office*

30 May 1831

Riga Fir Timber + Masts	£46,412
Dantzig Do.+Deck deals	£31,693
Norway Spars	£2,370
Canada Goods	£64,842
Canvas	£60,569
Baltic Hemp	£235,527*
Italian + Hungarian Do.	£36,990
New Zealand Do.	£8350
Tar	£1,361
Do (about to be agreed for)	£1,848
Pitch	£1,533
Tallow	£1,602
Rosin	£21
Linseed Oil	£5,044
Train+Seal Oil	
(to be agreed for)	£1,800
Coals	£16,786
Elm Timber	£8,500
Pitch Pine Timber	£20,150
African Timber	£125,027
Italian Timber	£40,000
English Oak Timber	£91,750
Thickstuff and Plank	£4,650
Larch Timber (say)	£1,500
Dantzig Fir Timber (1 cargo)	£1,500
Articles on standing contracts	£200,000

Total £1,009,825 exclusive of the cost of steam vessel machinery which has been spoken of as £70,000.

C. Graham.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Charles Graham, first chief clerk (Stores office) 1829–32. He was private secretary to the controller, Byam Martin, in 1816 before moving to the Stores office. Collinge, *Office Holders ... VII, Navy Board Officials*, p. 105.

\* The probability of an armament in the early part of the year induced Sir J. Graham<sup>1</sup> to sanction the purchase of 3,021 tons of hemp more than was proposed when the estimates for 1831 were submitted, which at £40 pr. ton will make an increased expense beyond the estimate of £120,840.

## List of Documents and Sources

### *Collections used.*

The National Archives (TNA), [1, 5, 6, 10] are published by kind permission of the Controller of HM Stationery Office.

The British Library (BL) Add. Ms. 37275 Wellesley Papers, Series II (Volume II); Add. Ms. 39238 Liverpool Papers, vol. xlix; Add. Ms. 41368, vol. xxiii; Add. Ms. 41394, vol. xlix; Add. Ms. 41395, vol. I; Add. Ms. 41400, vol. Iv, Sir Thomas Byam Martin Papers – [4, 7, 12–20] are published by kind permission of the Trustees of the British Library.

The National Maritime Museum (NMM) – [2, 3, 8, 9, 11] are published by kind permission of the Trustees.

- 1 Navy Board to Admiralty Secretary, 30 March 1802 TNA Adm 106/2229, ff. 222–4
- 2 Benjamin Slade to Navy Board, 27 April 1804 NMM Adm BP/24A
- 3 Sir William Rule to Navy Board, 29 April 1804 NMM Adm BP/24A
- 4 Enclosure in Lord Melville's Letter to the Marquess Wellesley, 4 July 1804 BL Add MS 37275, ff. 292–7
- 5 Navy Board to John Leard, 11 Sept. 1804 TNA Adm 49/165, vol. 1, pp. 29–34
- 6 Navy Board review of a report by Mr Leard, 9 Feb. 1810 TNA, Adm 49/168, pp. 146–8
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- 8 Isaac Solly to Navy Board, 11 July 1807 NMM Adm/B/227
- 9 Scott, Idles & Co. to Navy Board, 6 Oct. 1807 NMM Adm/B/228
- 10 Woolwich Dockyard Shipwrights to Navy Board, 9 March 1805 TNA, Adm 106/1791
- 11 Navy Board to William Marsden, 7 March 1806 NMM Adm/BP/26

<sup>1</sup>Sir James Graham, First Lord of the Admiralty, 1830–34, 1853–55.

- 12 Memo by Sir T. B. Martin, 7 Dec. 1816 BL Add MS 41394, ff. 65v–6
- 13 Sir T. B. Martin to Lord Melville, 2 Aug. 1817 BL Add MS 41400, ff. 14v–20
- 14 Sir T. B. Martin to Lord Melville, 29 Oct. 1817 BL Add MS 41400, ff. 41–3
- 15 Sir T. B. Martin to Lord Melville, 8 July 1819 BL Add MS 41400, ff. 55–9
- 16 Sir T. B. Martin to Mr Cuming, Riga, 28 May 1818 BL Add MS 41394, ff. 169–70
- 17 Sir T. B. Martin to Mr Downie, 29 Sept. 1819 BL Add MS 41395, f. 4
- 18 Sir T. B. Martin to Governor MacQuarrie, 30 July 1819 BL Add MS 41394, ff. 195–7v
- 19 Sir T. B. Martin to Sir Jahleel Brenton, 4 Aug. 1819 BL Add MS 41394, ff. 399–403.
- 20 An Account of the Cost of the Stores Agreed for the Year 1831, C. Graham to Sir T. B. Martin, 30 May 1831 BL Add MS 41368, f. 251

## VI

# THE JOURNAL OF LIEUTENANT GEORGE BEDFORD, 1835–36: SURVEYING ON THE WEST COAST OF AFRICA

*Edited by*  
*Matthew Sheldon*

Amongst the recently catalogued manuscripts from the Admiralty Library collection are a series of ten personal journals kept by Vice Admiral George Augustus Bedford (1809–78) for the years between 1830 and 1860.<sup>1</sup> Setting aside one break in the 1830s, these provide a continuous and remarkable record of nearly 30 years of naval surveying. Bedford was a successful specialist officer who commanded surveying vessels for 20 years, was eventually appointed Assistant Hydrographer in 1863 and became Marine Advisor to the Board of Trade shortly afterwards.<sup>2</sup> His career took place about as far from the quarter-deck of a flag-ship as was possible in the mid-nineteenth-century Navy; the last two decades of his sea-going service were spent in the cutter *Sylvia* surveying the west and northwest coasts of Ireland.

Bedford was serving in a Navy that was small in historic terms (it mustered just under 26,000 men when he took his first command<sup>3</sup>), but it was a Navy which, under John Barrow, as Secretary to the Admiralty,<sup>4</sup> and Frances Beaufort as Hydrographer, put real resources into exploration, surveying and associated scientific research.<sup>5</sup> Beaufort's period as Hydrographer (1829–55) has been described as the 'high noon' of the

<sup>1</sup>Donated in 1951, the collection's reference is: Royal Naval Museum, Admiralty Library Manuscript MSS 151.

<sup>2</sup>L. S. Dawson, *Memoirs of Hydrography; including brief biographies of the principal officers who have served in the Naval Surveying Service between the years 1750 and 1885* (Eastbourne, 1885), pp. 56–7. His career was: Volunteer 1st Class (23 Dec. 1823), Midshipman (Sept. 1826), Lt (19 Dec. 1834), Cdr (24 Sept. 1843), Capt (2 Jan. 1854). He served on *Investigator* (1823–26), *Wolf* (1826–29), *Protector* (1830–31), *Fairy* (1831–35), *Raven* (1835–8), *Gulnare* (1839–44) and *Sylvia* (from 1844).

<sup>3</sup>Royal Naval Museum, Admiralty Library Manuscript MSS 191. In December 1835, 25,961 were mustered, including 8,434 Marines.

<sup>4</sup>Sir John Barrow (1764–1848).

<sup>5</sup>RA Francis Beaufort (1774–1857) was a significant scientific figure. He was successively made a Fellow of the Geological Society in 1808, of the Royal Society in 1814, and of the Astronomical Society in 1820. In 1830 he helped Barrow form the Royal Geographical Society.

Hydrographic Office,<sup>1</sup> and it was one of remarkable achievement. Although office resources for chart production were initially small, Beaufort managed to increase these and to secure more vessels for the surveying service – including in 1841 the use of six paddle steam vessels, which helped revolutionise practice. These resources allowed comprehensive surveys to be made overseas and in home waters.<sup>2</sup> These surveys produced real benefits; the number of new charts produced annually increased from 19 in 1830 to 130 in 1855, and details of revisions to existing printed charts were published from 1832 in ‘The Nautical magazine’, and from 1834 as ‘Notices to Mariners’. In 1823 charts had first been made available commercially to the rest of world, and in the year when Beaufort left office 140,000 copies from a series of 2,000 charts were sold or distributed to the fleet.<sup>3</sup> Bedford never had a starring role, never took part in the high-profile exploration of the Arctic, but his methodical surveying is typical of the work which contributed to this expansion.

It is clear that as a young man Bedford was aware of the personal risk of specialising which tended to divert officers from conventional naval practice. He wrote of his time on HMS *Fairy* in 1834, when describing a falling-out between Captain William Hewett<sup>4</sup> and his Lieutenant which resulted in the latter leaving the ship, that,

The office of executive on board the *Fairy*, or under Capt. H——t, is one of a very peculiar kind, distinct indeed, from *every* other in the Service, I may truly say. From a long period of absence from the regular line of the profession, Capt. H. had imbibed a peculiar system of command, ill suited to those who were strangers to it. Since the year 1818 he had commanded a surveying vessel, and a great part of that period in the rank of Lieutenant. Having therefore few officers, and those of subordinate rank in the service, there was little to keep alive within him, that general system pursued throughout the service. And from the character of the service requiring an almost constant attention to the duty of the vessel, a gradual change in the system had grown upon him, which length of service continued to strengthen. Officers joining this vessel had therefore to *learn*, as it were, a *new* profession,

<sup>1</sup>G. S. Ritchie, *The Admiralty Chart; British Naval Hydrography in the Nineteenth Century* (London, 1967), p. 189.

<sup>2</sup>A full list is available in Capt. T. H. Tizard, *Chronological List of the Officers Conducting British Maritime Surveys; together with the names of vessels employed from the earliest times until 1900* (HMSO, London, 1900), pp. 14–26.

<sup>3</sup>G. S. Ritchie, *The Admiralty Chart*, pp. 187–99.

<sup>4</sup>Capt. William Hewett (d.1840). Described by Edward Belcher as ‘a very steady hard-working fellow not to be replaced by any of the feather bed crew about Charing Cross’.

and few like to give up notions grown upon them by many years' experience.

The extracts selected for this volume come from Bedford's second surviving journal and show him at a vital stage in his career, about to become (like Hewett) a lieutenant in command of a surveying vessel. In late 1834 he is promoted to Lieutenant and a year later is appointed to his first command in the cutter *Raven*. This journal, and the signal book which was devised for the commission, have been chosen because they show, through an individual's career, something of the day-to-day reality of the Navy's surveying work at this key period. Bedford is an excellent writer and comments on, amongst other things, the reasons for his appointment, fitting out and crewing a survey vessel, the routines of surveying work, and the practical arrangement of this work on the African coast at a time when the Navy was suppressing the slave trade.

Bedford was clearly a committed and skilled officer, but he attributes his promotion in advance of equally able candidates to 'family services' and the patronage of Hydrographer to the Navy Francis Beaufort. The family's sacrifices were notable: he was the son of Lieutenant Frederick Bedford (b. 1779) who, having lost his right eye and suffered an injury to his jaw in action with the French frigate *Seine* on 30 June 1798, also lost his left leg in a boat action of 18 June 1801. Four of the Lieutenant's five sons joined the Navy, the eldest of whom had died when surveying in the West Indies as a Mate on HMS *Blossom* under Commander Richard Owen, 1829–33.<sup>1</sup> Beaufort receives due credit for George's promotion, and it is clear that he was responsible for the latter's appointment to HMS *Raven* and his first (not quite independent) command. Beaufort had become Hydrographer in 1829, and held the power to recommend surveying appointments until 1855. He was the key patron for a young lieutenant and assistant surveyor to secure early in his career.

Bedford's appointment in 1835 to command the *Raven* was to assist in the survey of 'the Gold Coast from Sherbro Island to Corisco Bay'.<sup>2</sup> Although he was in command of the ship, the senior officer for the survey was the experienced Captain Alexander Vidal,<sup>3</sup> based in the considerably larger *Etna*, who issued and enforced precise instructions. The extent of the survey was in fact much wider than the Gold Coast itself, and covered the coastline, over 2,000 miles in length, between 7° North and 1° North. The starting point of reference for the survey was William Owen's African

<sup>1</sup>William R. O'Byrne, *A Naval Biographical Dictionary* (London, 1849), pp. 65–6.

<sup>2</sup>The former in modern-day Sierra Leone, the latter in Equatorial Guinea.

<sup>3</sup>VA Alexander Vidal (1792–1863).

survey, conducted between 1821 and 1826.<sup>1</sup> The *Raven* stayed in commission for nearly three years until 9 November 1838, and Bedford then spent another six months in 'completing charts'.<sup>2</sup> The extract here covers just two months at the start of the commission and a relatively small part of the survey.

The *Raven* was a small cutter, with a deck length of 60 feet 9 inches, a breadth amidships of 20 feet 3 inches, and a complement of 30. When he took command the ship had already previously been a survey vessel on the African coast, but modifications were needed for accommodation and for positioning instruments (see entry for 21 January 1836). Bedford's small crew were highly skilled with some experience in survey work.<sup>3</sup> He was the only commissioned officer on board, but was joined by a 'Second Master', Assistant Surgeon, Mate, Midshipman, and a 'Clerk in Charge'. Of the 18 men rated below petty officer (excluding four boys) the youngest crew member was 20 and their average age was over 28, all the seamen were rated 'Able Seaman', and three had come from the surveying vessel *Etna*. The crew was supplemented at Sierra Leone by three 'kroomen' and by three 'liberated African boys' who were borne for victuals only in order to learn a trade.

Bedford was supplied with a modest set of equipment for surveying and for the preparation of charts, and clearly also took some of his own works of reference. The journal describes the routines of surveying: checking and comparing chronometers, creating markings, taking positional readings, soundings and tidal readings, recording magnetic deviation, and so on. A signal book for this commission, which accompanies the journals, shows in detail how Bedford ordered the work to gather information from these routines. The signal code allowed the ship to communicate with its boats regarding time and distance, measurements and the placing of beacons, and with stations set up on shore. It is reproduced here following the journal.

Bedford was as meticulous a journal keeper as he was a surveyor. The journal appears to have been written up periodically as a review and explanation of recent events, rather than as a true daily record. Entries are in such a polished style that he surely intended others to read them, and they contain descriptions of places he feels will be of interest; here these descriptions have usually been omitted unless they reflect on his work.

<sup>1</sup>V A William Fitzwilliam Owen (1774–1857).

<sup>2</sup>MSS 151/h. Unfortunately, the one gap in Bedford's surviving journals is between late March 1836 and March 1839, covering the bulk of the Gold Coast survey and the period spent on charts.

<sup>3</sup>All figures taken from The National Archives, ADM 37/9631, Muster List of HM Surveying Vessel *Raven*, 1835–7.

The journal also has occasional gaps where he left spaces for pieces of particular information but failed to go back and complete them.

## JOURNAL

[27th December 1834]

At 10<sup>h</sup> Mustered ship's company, by divisions, with their bags, hammocks, clues and lashings. At 2h the crew went to the Dock Yard to receive their pay, and at sunset HM Ship Fairy was put out of commission, after a service of a little more than 3 years, she having been commissioned on the 10th of December, at Sheerness.

I was not paid off with the rest of the crew, having had the good fortune to receive my Lieutenant's commission on the 19th inst. and at this period I was on half pay. My Mother had been making great exertions to achieve this long wished-for event; but although Lord Auckland, the First Lord of the Admiralty, did not deny the claims of her family, or shut the door against hope, he could not give any immediate prospects, and I had ceased to flatter myself with buoyant expectations. Having received intelligence, whilst stopping at Bath, that the Ministry were about to resign, she made a last appeal to his Lordship, telling him that now was the only opportunity of doing a kind service to me, who by family services in their country's cause, held some little claim on his patronage. This appeal to Lord Auckland's kind feelings, proved successful, and whilst sitting at dinner on the 22nd December 1834, my Mother received a private note from the Hydrographer Capt. Frances Beaufort F.R.S. announcing the joyful intelligence in the following words.

Admiralty Dec<sup>r</sup> 22/34

Dear Madam,

It gives me unaffected pleasure to inform you that your son has been promoted – and if you knew the number of candidates of powerful interests who have been rejected in his favour, and the number of claims of longer service and of equal merit over which he has triumphed – you would indeed feel grateful for the noble impartiality of Lord Auckland's decision in the first point of view – and in the second for his generous and considerate kindness to you.

Yours truly,

F. Beaufort.

In the evening of the same day my mother also received the following from Lord Auckland.

*Private*

Admiralty Dec<sup>r</sup> 22. 1834

Madam,

I have had the pleasure this day of signing a Lieutenant's commission for your son, and I am satisfied from his excellent character, that in complying with a request, so warmly and so properly urged by you, I am securing a good officer to the King's Service, and that he will fully justify the selection which I have made.

Auckland

To the extraordinary and unceasing exertions of my most excellent parent, and to the kind and warmly urged request of that most excellent officer Captain Beaufort, I feel myself indebted to this piece of good fortune. My naval career commenced on the 5th December 1823, making a period of servitude of upwards of eleven years; about six months of this time I was without a ship in consequence of leaving the *Wolf* and coming home. When I look around me and behold the numerous list of candidates for promotion, men possessing apparently much greater interest, I deem myself peculiarly fortunate. Mr Lord, Assistant Surveyor of the Investigator was much my senior, both in the regular service and the hydrographical, he having been Assistant when I was a mess mate in the year 1826, and before that period in the *Hasty* with Mr Fitzmaurice, so that it is difficult to account for my good luck, otherwise than the claim which family services gave. My own promotion with that of Lieutenant William Honeyman Henderson to the rank of Commander, was the last act of Lord Auckland before resigning office; he went out the following day I believe.

I of course went and offered my most sincere acknowledgements of gratitude to Capt Beaufort for his staunch support; and he promised to use his exertions to get me appointed as Supernumerary Lieut<sup>t</sup> and Assistant Surveyor to my old backy the *Fairy*, which vessel had been commissioned on the following day to that on which she was paid off, the same officers joining.

On the 6th January I received my commission as Supernumerary Lieutenant to the *Fairy*, and although I did not get my appointment as Assistant Surveyor until a few days subsequent owing to some mistake, it bore the same date as my commission. Soon after my promotion I dined with Sir Thomas Hardy, the Governor of Greenwich Hospital, who had also promised to use his influence on my behalf.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>At this date George's father, Lt Frederick Bedford, was the most senior Lieutenant resident at Greenwich Hospital.

[Bedford rejoined HMS *Fairy*, under the command of William Hewett, on 7 January 1835, and the journal then describes at length a year spent on the North Sea survey.]

[December 1835]

I had hitherto purposely refrained from making any observations respecting the intention of the Admiralty towards the surveying vessels during the winter. We had for some short time previous to our leaving Harwich been made acquainted with the intention of Government to pay us off as a measure of economy, but these reports left us in doubt whether it was meant to discharge *all* the officers and crew or only a portion of them. Capt. Hewett had then written to the Hydrographer pointing out the injurious tendency of such a measure towards the Surveying Service in general, which could then offer no inducement for officers or men to enter, where it was to be all work, and that *extra* work, and no play: to pay all the summer and then be turned adrift as unprofitable servants in the winter, a time when men most needed a situation. On our arrival in the River Capt. H. had a conference with Sir Charles Adams (one of the Lords) and pointed out so clearly what he had before stated, that some modifications were thought necessary, so that instead of paying us off in toto, a portion not then decided upon, were to be retained in Commission.

On the 2d I took the chronometers to Greenwich in the gig, and returned them to the Royal Observatory, obtaining their errors at the same time. On the same day in the afternoon I took my seat on a Brighton coach, and joined my mother and sister Mary at Reigate, whither they had gone for the benefit of change to the latter. ...

[There follows a description of visit to Reigate.]

' As my leave of absence was expired, I returned to Greenwich on Saturday night, leaving my sister considerably better for the change. The *Fairy* had during this interval been dismantling, and the crew as usual employed by the Commodore in various extra duties, for which however they received no additional emolument.

On Tuesday the 8th I went to the Admiralty to pay my respects to the Hydrographer, and more particularly to remove any impression that might rest upon his mind that I was unwilling to serve abroad: for in a letter to Capt. Hewett a few days previous to our arrival in the River, he had put the question 'How would Bedford like to join the *Sulphur*?' As Capt. H. seemed much vexed at the thought that I should leave him, but more on account of the reputed bad temper of Capt. Beechey of the *Sulphur*, I at

that time told Capt. H that I felt no particular desire to go, particularly as I could not see how the change could better my condition: this Capt. H told the Hydrographer in answer to his question. On mature consideration however, I felt that, though my circumstances would not be *directly* improved, yet the change of service and the interesting voyage the Sulphur was about to make, must greatly increase my knowledge and enlarge my views; and I therefore deemed it a duty I owed to myself as well as to my Profession to change my first resolve, and to accept the proffered offer, if the situation was still disposable. This resolution greatly annoyed the Commander who tried everything to discourage it. He mentioned it, however, to Capt. Beaufort on our arrival, who then said, 'I could not go', at least such was Capt. Hewett's statement. I therefore thought little more of the subject, until I mentioned it in person to the Hydrographer, who asked if I was still willing to join the Sulphur. Finding that I was not certain of being the Assistant Surveyor, I hesitated, when Capt. B. said he had a much better appointment for me, if I would accept it, and that was the command of the Raven Cutter, attached to the Survey of the Gold Coast under the orders of Capt. Vidal of the Etna. He strongly urged me to accept this situation, as one not likely to offer itself again for some time, and I therefore merely required a few hours to consider of it, though my mind was at the same time made up to accept it. There was one subject upon which I felt some uneasiness, and that was, having much of the survey of Harwich Harbour yet to lay down, and which would require my presence (it being my own work) I considered it hardly fair to leave Capt. Hewett before this was completed, and I told Capt. B. my ideas on this subject, which he however, did not think sufficient to warrant my remaining. I immediately acquainted Capt. H. of my intention to leave him, at which he was not at all pleased, and threw many obstacles in my way in regard to the work yet remaining to be done, which I promised to explain clearly to him before I left, that he might himself be able to compile it. On the following morning I saw Capt. Beaufort, accepted the appointment, and then went to prepare for the voyage, having only until Saturday to get everything ready, as it was said the Raven would sail on the Monday. On the evening of the same day (the 9th Dec<sup>r</sup>) I received my appointment to repair *immediately* to Portsmouth to take up my commission at the Admiral Superintendent's Office. Having completed my duties, and obtained my necessaries, on Saturday evening at 8.30 I seated myself in the inside of the 'Star of Brunswick' Portsmouth coach, and was soon beyond the noise and bustle of the 'Great Metropolis'. On the 11th the complement of the Fairy was reduced to her winter's establishment, which consisted of the Captain, Hoskyns, Stevens, St John, Lamb (I believe), Johnson the Clerk, and six able leadsmen, Captain's

and Gunroom Stewards, and the marines and Warrant Officers. The Investigator had been paid off in toto, as she was in want of extensive repairs, but the Commander, his Assistant with some few others were kept in pay, and six of his best seamen were allowed to be borne on the books of the William and Mary Yacht, until they fitted out in the Spring. Lieut. Watts returned to his home, not particularly anxious for another employment unless in a Guard Ship.

We arrived at Portsmouth after a fine journey at 7.30 AM, and I put up at the Ship & Castle as being convenient for the Dock Yard. Having dressed and taken my breakfast, I took up my commission at the Superintendent's Office (notwithstanding it was Sunday) paying a fee of 5s. I then took boat and repaired on board my Cutter, which I found lying alongside the Prometheus Hulk, and far from being ready for sea. I then paid my respects and delivered my letters of introduction to Capt. Vidal onboard the Etna who was very glad to see me, as he was now ready for sea, and only indeed waited for us. I received a visit from my brother Alfred and cousin James Bedford who were at school at Fareham, and we all dined at Mr [Ryder's] at Gosport, at whose hospitable home I generally slept until we sailed. With respect to the Raven, she was in a most confused state, both her decks being lumbered up with stores and provisions, they having taken onboard as much as would serve for five months, far more than she could stow with any degree of ease or comfort. The berth abaft my cabin properly appropriated to the steward had been filled with bread and slops, and besides this there was a considerable quantity of these articles upon the lower deck, not under any cover. I therefore gave up one of my bed places in the cabin, which was boarded up and made to contain what bread and slops were not yet stowed away. On the lower deck round the main mast were stowed 10 provision casks, in two tiers; and all the binns and every part was crammed to excess.

Until this present time of fitting out, she had been rigged as a Cutter, but she was now a *dandy*, retaining however the same main mast and bowsprit, which were both very large spars. The bumpkin for the lug-mizen instead of being *upon* the tafferal where it could have been topped up at pleasure, when at sea or riding at anchor in bad weather, was fitted *below* the tafferal, obliging us to rig it in and lumber our decks, already crammed, for with the cutter and dingy on one side, and a large broad galley on the other there was no room to move. There were davits fitted on each side abreast, to hoist these boats up to, but they were only calculated for harbour or very fine weather at sea: and the galley not having been fitted with bolts in her keel for the tackles, was obliged to be hung in slings which did not take her above our gunwale. Besides our two bower anchors we carried a spare one stowed up and down the after part

of the main hatchway. Our armament consisted of two brass six pounders and two carronades of the same calibre; these we stowed amidships, the brass guns between my companion and skylight, and the carronades between the latter and that of the gunroom. The windlass worked with two lever bars at the extremities, which by an ingenious contrivance did not require to be unshipped but were lifted to its erect position after heaving down: each bar is provided with bell ropes.

Our complement consisted altogether of thirty persons, with four supernumeraries on our arrival on the Coast of Africa: out of this number were seven Officers, viz Commander, Mates or Mids, Vol. 1st Class, Assistant Surgeon, and Clerk in Charge: these were all complete, excepting the Vol. 1st Class, Mr Brook Young, the Mate having joined the day following to myself. One very serious deficiency in our Complement was that of Carpenter's Mate, one having deserted soon after entering and though we tried everywhere for another, and the pay being equal to First Rate's, yet we never could obtain one, and actually sailed without this necessary part of a ship's complement.

On Tuesday the 16th the Port Admiral, Sir Thos Williams inspected the Etna, Sulphur, Starling and Raven, and had previously sent a Pilot onboard to take us out, but when he came and found the unprepared condition we were in, he saw it was quite absurd to think of sending us out, and dismissed the Pilot accordingly, giving me another day to put the vessel in order. The short time I remained in Harbour was therefore no easy or quiet period, for between getting the vessel ready for sea, and providing myself with necessaries, I was completely harassed, and more particularly as I had no steward, the vacancy having been thoughtlessly filled up prior to my arrival. The Etna went out of the Harbour on Wednesday the 18th and was paid advance on the same day, and on Thursday we also followed, the Admiral Superintendent coming out and paying advance on our way to Spithead. I understood afterwards that Sir Fred<sup>k</sup> Maitland<sup>1</sup> had remarked that it was a precious shame to send us to sea in the condition we were in, and I suppose a similar circumstance seldom occurred before of a man of war proceeding to sea without a Carpenter of some kind onboard.

On the following morning we succeeded in getting off all our stores and signing the necessary papers: I also got the loan of two of the Etna's Carpenters to do a few necessary jobs, and succeeded in getting a Steward from the same vessel. This Steward was a negro, from Accra, who had been employed and had come to England onboard the Brisk, and was about to take a passage to his native country; and as on my arrival on the

<sup>1</sup>RA Sir Frederick Maitland was the Admiral Superintendent of the Dockyard.

Coast I was allowed to take four supernumeraries, I got Capt. Vidal to lend me this Steward until we should be able to place him upon the ship's books. He was a young fellow of very small stature, and very good natured and attentive, and I was glad indeed to get anyone with these qualifications.<sup>1</sup> The *Racer* 18 guns, arrived at Spithead from the West Indies; and the *Sulphur* and *Starling* Schooner came out of Harbour. The *Starling* commanded by Lieut. Kellet, who lately left the *Raven*, was previous to this a Cutter, but had for the sake of convenience been converted to a Schooner: her lower deck had been sunk to give room between decks, but this alteration had so encroached upon her hold, that she could stow no more than 5 weeks provisions, and her water tanks protruded two or three feet above the deck in the midshipman's berth, and formed a high resting place for their table, obliging them to provide chairs of peculiar construction, that is to say with very long legs, similar to a child's chair, in order that they might reach this table: only conceive the inconvenience of this arrangement, when to get at the water everyday must put their berth in confusion.

Having received my orders from the Admiralty and Admiral and from Capt Vidal, together with two chronometers, and other instruments, papers &c at 3.30 we both weighed, with the wind at north, and stood to sea round the Nab; the *Etna* carried a light during the night, the better to enable us to keep company.

Let me now take a cursory review at the object of our expedition, and of the orders for the guidance of our conduct. With respect to our own orders they were brief enough, merely requiring me to put myself under the command of Capt. Alexander E. Vidal, commanding His Majesty's Surveying vessel *Etna*, and to follow his orders for my further proceedings, signed Chas. Adams, W. Parker. From the Admiralty I was also furnished with due authority for capturing slave vessels upon the Coast, private signals &c. Those from Capt. Vidal were rather longer, and also contained a copy of the Hydrographer's instructions for our proceedings in the prosecution of the survey. The orders of Capt Vidal ran thus:

By Alex<sup>r</sup> F.E. Vidal Esq. Captain of His Majesty's Surveying Vessel *Etna*, and Senior Officer employed on the Survey of the Gold Coast – Africa. My Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty having commanded me to take under my orders His M.S[urveying] Vessel *Raven* you command. It is my direction you consider yourself so accordingly, and I shall expect from you, on all occasions, a hearty co-operation with me in the survey their Lordships have ordered me to conduct.

<sup>1</sup>Richard Joseph.

The service we are called upon to perform has for its object the survey of the Gold Coast from Sherbro' Island, to Corisco Bay, and you will from time to time receive from me the necessary instructions for carrying it into effect.

'It is intended on our passage out, that the Etna and Raven proceed in company to Funchal in Madeira, – to Santa Cruz in Teneriffe, – to Porto Praya in S<sup>t</sup>. Jago of the Cape de Verds, – to the Isles de Los, and to Sierra Leone in Africa, and at each of these places to obtain the errors of the chronometers; and it is my direction that you use all diligence to prevent a separation, and are particularly attentive to the movements of the Etna, and to all signals made to you from her. You will use your best endeavours to preserve a station upon her weather quarter, when by the wind, and her starboard quarter when before it, and the better to enable you to do so, the Etna will carry a light at her mast head thro' the night.

We are instructed to make the best of our way, generally assigned to the Eight Stones, and there cross the parallel of 34° 45' N latitude, in the longitude of 16° W<sup>t</sup>, and obtain a few deep casts of the lead, in passing the alledge[d] position of these shoals – a small plan exhibiting the tracks of several of His Majesty's ships in passing the vicinity of this danger will be furnished to you, and in the event of parting company, you will in your run to Madeira endeavour to pass in the latitude and longitude above mentioned, and try for soundings occasionally on the track – Should you under such circumstances find that the Etna has not been at Funchal, you will keep off that anchorage, twenty four hours, and obtain the error of your chronometers in the garden of the Cottage, belonging to Mr Veitch, His Majesty's Consul at that island – you will then proceed to Teneriffe, and at Santa Cruz, determine the error of your chronometers at the Consul's house.

Should you fail in obtaining intelligence of the Etna at that place, you will then proceed to Porto Praya S<sup>t</sup> Jago, and find the error of your chronometer on Quail Island, in that harbour.

Should the Etna not have touched there, you will complete your water at that Port, and wait for her three days, at the expiration of which time you will then sail for the Isles de Los, and Sierra Leone, and at A on Crawford Island, and at the Citadel of Sierra Leone, you will merely remain long enough to obtain the error of your chronometers, and then proceed to the Banana Islands, in the vicinity of which you will wait the Etna's arrival, first determining the error of your chronometer upon one of them, and then employing the time in tracing out, and surveying the Shoals of S<sup>t</sup> Ann – you will give attention to the tides of those Islands, and obtain all the information you can upon them, during your examination of the shoals.

My Lords of the Admiralty have been pleased to direct the accompanying memorandum to be delivered to you, which whenever you may be absent from me, you will present to any senior officer you may meet with.

You will attend to whatever instructions you may from time to time receive from the Admiralty Hydrographer; I send you herewith a copy of his instructions to me, and you will endeavour to meet their spirit under the orders I now give you.

Given under my hand onboard His Majesty's Surveying Vessel Etna at Spithead, this 18th of December 1835 (Signed) Alex<sup>r</sup> F.E. Vidal  
Captain.

To Lieut. Geo: Aug: Bedford. H.M. Surveying Vessel Raven

There follows the Admiralty memorandum.

Admiralty 16th Dec<sup>r</sup> 1835

Memorandum

My Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty having ordered Captain Vidal of His Majesty's Surveying Ship Etna, with the Raven under his orders, to make surveys of various parts of the coast of Africa and the Canary Islands, it is their Lordships direction that no senior officer who may fall in with Captain Vidal while he is employed in the above important duties, do divert him therefrom, or in any way interfere with him, or the vessels under his orders, or take from him, on any account, any of his instruments or chronometers

By Command of their Lordships Signed John Barrow

Then follow the Hydrographer's instructions which are too long to insert here. Suffice to say they give a clear definition of what is required from me, in order to make our researches as valuable as possible. These instructions will be hereafter referred to when speaking in detail of the 'various parts contained therein, practically –

I was furnished with two chronometers, one an eight day watch No 93/5597 made by Hornby of Liverpool, and considered very good; the other a small pocket chronometer of Arnold's, No 2180, reported as worth little, and only fit for an observation watch; both of them were in the Raven before. Also:

artificial horizon

azimuth compass

parallel ruler (brass)

protractor (brass circular)

protractor horn (two)

scale (brass)

sextant

case of drawing instruments

theodolite

telescope

two plain thermometers (spirit)

one of [Sra's Registerium] ditto

patent log (Massey's)

Daniel's Hygrometer

2 measuring tapes

1 box magnet, and one horse-shoe

Besides some stationary, nautical almanacks, Belcher's Surveying,<sup>1</sup> Simms on instruments,<sup>2</sup> and a few other useful books, relative to the collecting and preserving natural productions &c. I had no barometer.

We continued running to the westward with a brisk breeze from the eastward, until the 22nd, when the wind veered round to the southward and commenced blowing very strong, and at 4 pm we were under close reef'd mainsail – topmast down. At 1 am on Wednesday the hands were turned up to set the topsail, and when I came on deck, I found they had lost sight of the Etna, having last seen her on the lee quarter. 'Twas a very nasty night, blowing and raining violently, with a heavy sea running, which in our deep state caused us to labour and work very much, and required the pumps to be frequently going, as the water got into our provision bins. The crew being strangers to a cutter, were a long time getting her under the trysail, and it was near seven o'clock before the watch was called, after 'splicing the main brace'. We were now heading about SW but making little way through the water, being hove to under a reef'd topsail and storm jib. We had a most sorry Christmas Day, everything and everybody being wet through, and the motion of the vessel very violent; the wind was however, more moderate, and we got the double reef'd mainsail set.

On the morning of the 28th, a heavy sea struck our storm jib and split it much, but the sail was shamefully rotten. I got it repaired & strengthened with three bands of senit across the belly. We found the water had got into the bins on the lee side, and wet some of the stores; and the doctor's cabin had also much water in it, which came from the hold by way of the bilge.

<sup>1</sup>Edward Belcher, *Treatise on nautical surveying, containing an outline of the duties of the nautical surveyor, with cases applied to naval evolutions, and miscellaneous rules and tables useful to the seaman and traveller* (London, 1835).

<sup>2</sup>Frederick Simms, *A treatise on the principal mathematical instruments employed in surveying, levelling and astronomy...* (London, 1836).

On the 29th the weather was more moderate, and at 2pm we tacked to the SE<sup>t</sup> having fallen off upon the other tack. We had by this time reach[ed] to the 21½° of west longitude in the latitude of 41° 17' N having stood thus far in expectation of a Westerly wind.

The 31st, or last of the year, was calm, and on New Year's Day, we got a fine fresh breeze from the NE<sup>t</sup> which helped us on our voyage considerably.

[On the] 3rd Strong winds & much sea from the eastward, steering to the south for the reported position of the Eight Stones. At noon our Lat was 35° 21' N and at 2.30 being near the spot assigned, we tried sounding with burt's buoy and knipper with 270, 140, 160 and 168 fathoms, and found no bottom. At this time I obtained sights for the longitude, and by a mean of two indifferent sets made it about 16°¼ W in lat. 34° 52' N. There was however much sea running, and in our low vessel 'twas impossible to make any good observations, and it was ruinous work for the instruments, the spray and rain constantly covering them. We sounded through a space of about 15 miles, between the lats of 34° 56' and 34° 42'.

About 1 am on the 5th Jan<sup>y</sup> we discovered land in the SSW<sup>t</sup> and at 8h the NE<sup>t</sup> extreme of Porto Santo bore SE and the West end of Madeira [–]. In the afternoon we lay rolling about in a dead calm between the two islands. We never obtained a glimpse of the summit of Madeira ([Pico de Ruevo] which is elevated about 6000 feet above the sea), on account of the clouds which continually enveloped it. During the night we succeeded in reaching in between the Desertas and Madeira, but the winds were so light and variable that we progressed by very slow and partial steps towards Funchal, which was in view in the afternoon. The clouds continually hung over the several peaks of the Island showing us only now and then a peep at their summits but the monarch himself never deigned to emerge from his misty canopy. ...

[There follows a description of the island.]

Early on the morning of the 7th Jan we discerned the colours of the Etna from the Roads of Funchal, and seaward was seen the Sulphur showing her number, while the Starling Schooner was creeping towards the anchorage, close under the land. About 10.30 am we got the sea breeze which at noon brought us to anchor off the Loo Rock. The Sulphur came in about an hour after. The Etna had only arrived the previous afternoon, and this she had accomplished by coming round the West end of the Island where a breeze had favoured her: so that we were actually off the Island before her. The Sulphur and Starling had left Plymouth so late as Christmas Day, and had therefore had a much better passage. Having

compared my chronometers with those of the Etna, I went onshore, and found Capt. Vidal and his assistant observing for equal altitudes in the garden of Mr Veitch the English Vice Consul, and there being plenty without me, I left them to look about the town and procure a few necessaries after our long and comfortless cruize.

[There follows a description of a day spent in the town of Funchal.]

At about 1 o'clock am we got underweigh, and with a light breeze from the land made sail to the southward, leaving the Sulphur and Starling to follow the next day. The result of the Etna's chronometer gave the longitude of the Consul's house in the town 1h 7m 34s 9 West and those of the Sulphur 1h 7m 41s 4. For both ships there were chronometers.

Our next place of destination was Santa Cruz on Teneriffe, distant from Funchal about 252 miles on a  $S\frac{3}{4}$  E Course (true bearing). The only land which lies between these two places, are the Two Salvages, which are small desolate islets; and the Piton Rocks to the SW<sup>t</sup> of them. All these lie a little eastward of the track. We left sight of Madeira at about 11.30 on Friday morning, at which time we were running about 7 knots, with a fine breeze from the eastward, and a clear blue sky. We had considerable advantage over the Etna in this point of sailing, sparing her much sail. Lat at noon  $31^{\circ} 43\frac{1}{4}'$  N Long  $16^{\circ} 46\frac{1}{2}'$  W. I had received a note from Capt. Vidal at Madeira, desiring me to intimate to the officers, that in the event of our again parting company, he should deem it his duty to report to the Admiralty the name of the officer of the watch at the time. I therefore issued an order writing out the duties required by each executive; and it had the effect of keeping us always in our station hereafter; for much indifference had certainly been shown previous to our parting company.

On the 9th I was under the painful necessity of punishing a Seaman by the name of S. Long, for drunkenness, and mutinous language while at Madeira. I considered it necessary to begin this early, to point out to the ship's company my determination to maintain the discipline of the service unimpaired, and to remove at once the erroneous impression that many entertain, that drunkenness covers or palliates such disorderly and riotous behaviour; it being my firm persuasion that the true character of a man is shown forth at that time when fear and restraint is unfelt. Example this early made often stops the increase of disorder, and renders the necessity of punishment much less frequent. The extent of punishment was 24 lashes.

Lat at noon  $30^{\circ} 35\frac{1}{2}'$  N Long  $16^{\circ} 45'$  W. I had previously forgot to mention that in hauling in Massey's Patent Log, on the 3d Inst. it was found to be so perforated and indented, by the teeth of some fish evidently,

as to be rendered useless for the present: this is not the first instance of a similar kind. The *Chanticleer* on her voyage of science,<sup>1</sup> lost her rotator altogether, and the box bore the marks of shark's teeth, which had endeavoured to masticate it, but which I suppose was found too solid for the voracious monster.

All this day we had light breezes and variable, which obliged us to tack occasionally. At 3pm on Sunday 10th we saw the celebrated Peak of Teneriffe bearing SSW½W, and distant from us about 97 miles. At 5.30 p.m. I measured its angle of elevation above the horizon = 34' 45" which calculated gave a distance of 95 miles, differing only about 2½ miles from our reckoning. The summit of the Peak, which is considered nearly 13,000 feet above the level of sea was at this time, particularly clear and well defined, and was capable of being reflected with considerable accuracy.

Light variable winds prevailed during Monday 11th, and being principally from the SW<sup>t</sup> we made but little progress towards our port. At noon Point Naga, the NE<sup>t</sup> point of the Island, bore S29°W, true dist. 29 miles. Tacked occasionally.

The 12th Jan. We had light breezes from WSW during the morning. I thought it a good opportunity to paint the vessel outside, to make her look a little respectable in port, we therefore turned to and soon accomplished it. I also cleared out my steward room which had been stowed with slops & bread and thus got this place for my servant. Several pounds of bread was spoiled, the water having got in during the bad weather; this I condemned by survey. ...

[There follows a description of coming to anchor off Santa Cruz and of the town.]

On the morning 13th Jan. we were onshore from both vessels at the Consul's House, to make our observations for equal altitudes, but the 'weather was so very unfavourable from the continual showers of mist, unusual I understood, that we could only obtain three or four corresponding altitudes. Capt. Vidal & self attended by Mr Bartlett, the English Consul, paid our respects to the Governor of the place, whose name I forget; he received us politely, though his manner seemed reserved and haughty, which, I understood is his general character. Capt Vidal was anxious to find in what manner he would receive the intimation of our intention of resuming the survey of the Canary Islands during the rainy season on the Coast; for though no objections had been offered to Lieut. Arlett, in the

<sup>1</sup>HMS *Chanticleer* in the southern Atlantic under the command of Henry Foster, 1827–31. A narrative was published in 1834.

previous year, changes of politics and opinions might dictate a different line of conduct; the Governor, however, did not seem to consider there was anything objectionable, at any rate he offered none. This ceremony being over we next went to the Commandant of Marine, who we found to be a jolly good fellow, very different from the Governor, and so also was the Commandant of Artillery, who besides had two pretty daughters, and a wife that could speak a little English. We dined with the Consul, as also did the Surgeon and Church the Assistant Surveyor of the Etna, with a gentleman named Hamilton, a resident. The Sulphur and Starling anchored about 2 o'clock, and just as we were going to sit down to dinner, an officer of the visiting boat came to inform us that, in consequence of their boat, in which was the Governor's Aid[e]-de-Camp, having been detained an unreasonable time alongside the Sulphur, without Capt. Beechy making his appearance to give the requested information in order that he might receive pratique, and the midshipmen on deck having laughed at them, they had returned indignant to the Governor, who had issued an order to stop all communication between the boats of the English ships and the shore, and that ourselves as well as the crews of the Sulphur and the Starling were at that moment in quarantine. This was an unfortunate dilemma, particularly for us, who had to establish a good name among the 'Powers that be'; and the Consul and Capt. Vidal immediately waited upon the Governor to explain the matter which had originated in some misunderstanding; for Capt. Beechy, it appeared, was dressing at the time the boat came alongside, and had unthinkingly sent up a message to say 'that he was then naked, but if they were in a great hurry they might come and see him as he was' or something to that effect. This message gave occasion to the youngsters to laugh, and the haughty and punctilious Spaniard was thereby deeply hurt in dignity. Capt Beechy and Lt Kellet came to the Mole, but were not allowed to land and after parleying for some time returned onboard highly incensed; and although the Governor sent off a boat 5.30 in the evening to release them from quarantine, Capt Beechy would not visit the shore that day. We went onboard our vessels about 7 PM.

The 14th. Officers from the various ships were early on the ground with sextants and artificial horizons, to observe for time, and although the day was not much better than the preceding, we succeeded in obtaining a sufficient number of observations. Capt. Beechy also made some observations on the dip of the needle and its intensity with a new dipping instrument made by Bate, of a peculiar construction, it being supposed to be so accurately balanced, as to obviate the necessity of reversing the poles. I got a full supply of water onboard, about 4 tons, from Roderique the Agent to the English house of 'Pasley and Little', who reside at Port Ratava

on the north side of the island. From this person I also got a quarter cask of wine, pay<sup>s</sup> £6.5 for it, or at the rate of £25 per pipe. As it is our intention to visit this place again I shall offer but few remarks at present. Suffice to say, I saw and heard enough to induce me to form rather a more favourable opinion of it, than I had of Madeira, and we anticipated the pleasure of being able to form an acquaintance with some of the respectable families, who are particularly partial to the English. Having completed our observations, at 4.15 p.m. we weighed anchor and continued standing off and on waiting for the other vessels which did not come out until after 8 o'clock; we all four vessels made sail SW½W, with a fine fresh breeze from NE<sup>t</sup>. We found that we beat all the vessels considerably, particularly the Sulphur and Starling, and as we were running right before the wind, I furled the mainsail, and ran under squaresail, and half-topsail; occasionally obliged to take in the latter to keep our station: all the other vessels had as much sail as they could carry.

Lat at Noon 15th was 26° 41½'N Long 17° 9½'W. Temperature of air 63.6 water 66.3.

At 5.30 PM on the 17th the Sulphur and Starling after a display of much buntin between the two seniors, expressing their hearty wishes of welfare towards each other, and a safe return to Old England, parted company under a volley of cheers, and stood more to the Westward for Rio Janeiro.

On the daylight of the 19th saw the land of the Isle of Sal, the northeastern of the Cape de Verds. ...

[There follows a description of Isle of Sal, a visit ashore in Porto Praya, and chronometer readings taken.]

About 5 p.m. of January 21st we made sail from Porto Praya Bay, and with a strong NE<sup>t</sup> breeze stood away to the SE<sup>t</sup> for the Isles de Los on the African coast. Captain Vidal had lent me a Carpenter for the cruize, as I had much to be done in that way. My two chronometers were not placed to my liking, being fixed upon the starboard lockers in my cabin, and therefore exposed to considerable motion besides being very much in my way: so I put them in a box well cushioned and firmly fixed to the fore part of the deck of my cabin, over two folds of fearnought,<sup>1</sup> and around this box was placed another as a guard, being an inch separated all round,

<sup>1</sup>Thick woollen cloth used for seamen's coats, but also to cover portholes and the doors of powder magazines.

so that anything striking it could not possibly effect the inner one; over all went a lid, and the whole had the appearance of a box, and would answer, when cushioned, for a low seat. The watches had been going shamefully bad since they had been onboard, and I was in hopes this alteration would improve them.

We had fresh winds from NE<sup>1</sup> and ENE accompanied by thick misty sky, the whole of Friday 22d; but Saturday was a clear day, tho' the wind blew rather fresh – by noon of that day we had progressed about 202 miles, the entire distance from Porto Praya to Isles de Los being about 660 miles.

During Sunday night we separated from the Etna, the latter not having showed a light; and on Monday morning she made the signal to sound hourly which we did with Burt's buoy and Knipper 65, 73, 243, 145, 80, 73 and 90 Fms between Lat 11° 8' N Long 17° 20' W and Lat 10° 56' and Long 17° 12' so that there seems to be a bank there with a deep hole near it.

We had some amusement today also, in catching a shark, who made bold to snap at a piece of pork, but who was no doubt dreadfully disappointed in finding, he had caught a 'Tartar'. He was soon hoisted on deck, and fell a victim to Jack's butchery, who seems to take a peculiar pleasure, and reasonably enough too, in making war against these voracious monsters of the deep. In less than half an hour he was cut into pieces and served out to the messes; but my prejudices were too strong to allow me to partake of it, tho' I understand it is very good eating. This was a young fish and measured ... [left blank].

We also caught some sucking fish, called, I believe, the Remora, and which by a peculiar construction on the back of the head, are enabled to adhere to the sides of vessels, or to large fish, as the shark &c. Buffon says 'they resemble a herring' but these were very different, having a close similarity to the dog fish, excepting that the lower jaw projected *beyond* the upper, while in the shark species, it is the reverse; this difference enables the fish, while adhering to its prey by its suckers, to make use of its mouth at the same time. They were very plentiful around the ship, although we caught but few. Several flying fish, had come onboard in the night. One of the largest shoals of porpoises that I had ever seen passed close to us about noon of this day, coming up from the southward, in full chase – they fairly made the sea foam from their numbers and their capers, and they covered, I suppose, half a mile square, and upwards, and very thickly arranged.

On Tues, our Lat. at noon was 10° 13½' N Long 16° 10' W temperature of air 77½, Sea 75½ with a fresh breeze from NE<sup>1</sup> and tolerably clear. Depth of water 24 fathoms, with coarse red brown sand.

The 28th J. At 3.30 p.m. observed the land of the Isles de Los bearing south, and at 8 o'clock we anchored in 5 fms, soft mud, to the northward side of the Isles. At daylight on the following day we weighed & stood in between Tamara and Factory Island, towards Rooma or Crawford Island which stands in the centre of the group, and at 10 o'clock we anchored in 5 fms muddy, rather more than  $\frac{1}{2}$  a mile northward of the highest or western part of the island. I immediately landed and obtained equal altitudes upon a small sandy beach on the north side, and in the place where the observations for determining the longitude were made by Lieut. James Badgely of the *Leven* when he surveyed the group in 1827. There are in this cluster three principal islands, with several smaller ones or rocks scattered here & there. The largest and western one is Tamara or Footaban; its form is an irregular crescent convexing to the NW<sup>t</sup> and is about 5 miles in length, and 1 in breadth at its northern extremity, tapering away to a mere point at its other end, where there are several small rocks or islets. There is a rock lying off its north point called the *Arethusa*, from the frigate of that name having struck upon it; and the French frigate *Ruby* was also lost upon it. The next in size and the most eastern one is Factory Island, which is also in form of a crescent, but convexing towards the east, forming as it were a continuation of the circular figure which seems to constitute the boundary of the group, and which may perhaps be the remains or crater of a volcanic eruption. For the centre of this supposed circle which is rather more than 5 miles external diameter, is Crawford Island, which is little more than a mile in length, rising at its western end into a peak of about 300 feet high. A very extensive bank of sand projects to the NE<sup>t</sup> almost joining Factory Island. Good anchorage in 4, 5 and 6 fms water may be found almost in any part of the group. Factory Island, or the *Isle de Los* was originally the only part occupied by the English, but they have now possession of the whole. On Crawford there is a Serjeant and 16 privates of the Native Cape Corps, besides a few 'pensioners and their families, some of the latter also cultivate the other islands, which produce plenty of limes, bananas, plantains, cassada, & oranges, besides wild goats &c. The whole are thickly covered with wood, among which the cotton tree raises to a conspicuous height. Some of our officers shot some very pretty little birds; they were honey birds I believe. There are also several beautiful butterflies, and many centipedes, the latter being particularly numerous on Crawford, where we found them lying dead and perfect upon the black rocks on the western side. The people make their canoes out of the trunk of the cotton tree, which is however very soft and not durable.

While lying here, both vessels were swung to obtain the local attraction, the *Etna* twice. If any reliance can be placed on the result of our

observations, it would appear that the line of no attractions was not with the head at north and south, but when SW<sup>1</sup> and NE<sup>1</sup> it was least, being then about 30 minutes in one case and 6 in the other, and greatest with the vessel's head at NW and SSE, when it was respectively 1° 37' and 1° 53'. The bearings were taken simultaneously onboard & onshore. In the Raven the great mass of iron consisting of the shot, [and] stream chain is stowed almost immediately *under* the compass, which stood before the companion; this I think affected the needle more than the other chains and guns which were forward, or at least acted in such a manner as to bring the centre of gravity much further aft than the centre of the vessel and to place it upon one side according to the stowage; it was but little more than an eighth of a point at the greatest. On Saturday the Etna obtained equal altitudes for time and some magnetic observations; and at 5.30 p.m. we weighed and stood to the southward for Sierra Leone, distant about 65 miles.

The wind blew in squalls from the eastward. In the morning we found we had overshot our port and got to leeward: at 11.30 a.m. we tacked and stood in towards the high land south of Sierra Leone. We had light and baffling winds in the afternoon but assisted by the tide, we succeeded in reaching the mouth of Sierra Leone River about 5 o'clock and by standing over a part of the middle ground in 2½ fms, we doubled upon the Etna, and reached our anchorage off the town at 7 p.m. depth of water 11 fathoms. The Etna did not arrive until 10 o'clock. H.M. Brigantine Buzzard was lying here, and numerous detained slave vessels, and prizes. ...

[There follows a description of the situation of Sierra Leone and Freetown.]

The old Conflict, 10 gun brig, which was condemned here a few years since is now converted into a receiving hulk for the prize masters and their crews. The Victualling Office is on King Tom's Point, and the house of Mr Salter, the Agent, is one of the prettiest in the settlement. The establishment is by no means extensive, and is frequently unable to supply the demands of the cruisers.

[There follows a description of the political situation in, and development of, Freetown.]

Our stay here was very short, and my time too fully occupied to permit me to make any excursions round the town. Our observations for the errors of our chronometers were made at the NE<sup>1</sup> battery, situated on a point forming the western extremity of Susan Bay, a small indentation, where the fishermen principally keep their boats, and reside. This part of the

town, I believe, contains chiefly the settlers from Jamaica, or the Maroons. I had equal altitudes on the 1st and 3d. We had also some magnetic observations, for variation, dip and intensity, in the grounds of the Agent Victualler. A tide pole was also erected off King Tom's Point, the heights being read off from the Etna.

By the Admiral's orders, all vessels can fill up their complements with native Africans and Kroomen; besides which they have each to take a certain proportion of these men, to perform the laborious duties, such as wooding and watering, or any other occupation that requires exposure to the sun, or much attendance on shore. Vessels commanded by lieutenants have 12 blacks allowed them, but Capt Vidal and myself had peculiar establishments from England, which allowed him to receive only eight, and the Raven four.<sup>1</sup> There are plenty of these Kroomen at Sierra Leone, waiting for employment, and you have numerous applications made, directly on your arrival, each bringing his certificates (books) if he has any to bring, from the vessels he has served in. This numerous tribe inhabited the coast about Cape Mount and Cape Palmas, and are very expert in the management of their canoes. 'Twas this expertise and general aptitude for the sea, together with a superior intelligence to other Coast tribes, that probably first brought them into notice with our traders, and they are now constantly employed by men of war and merchant ships during the time they remain upon the Coast, and are also to be found in all our settlements, performing domestic duties, and acting as a body-guard to the several Agents scattered about, being looked upon with dread by the other natives.

Besides this addition to our complements, every vessel was obliged to take six of the liberated African boys<sup>2</sup> from the school and to put them under the charge and tuition of the various artificers onboard, that they may acquire a knowledge of these trades, and be enabled to make themselves useful members of society, and to propagate their art among their countrymen. This was a wise and philanthropic design, whoever originated it, and must prove hereafter of incalculable benefit to these poor beings. Capt. Vidal considered three of these boys would be as many as I could find occupation for onboard the Raven, having so few artificers, and these (excepting the Carpenter) so seldom employed. We were not to receive them until our arrival at the Banana Islands, where a school was established by the present Governor.

<sup>1</sup>The kroomen were: 'Jack Neverfear', alias Tom Accra, 28, Landsman (discharged at his request 23 Nov. 1836); 'Tom Freeman', 30, Ordinary Seaman (discharged 21 June 1837); 'Fryingpan', alias Joseph Accra, 28, Landsman (discharged at his request 23 Nov. 1836); Richard Joseph, 23, Able Seaman (discharged 29 Feb. 1836).

<sup>2</sup>Enslaved Africans freed by the Navy's West Coast of Africa Squadron.

I had almost forgotten the noisy lady-laundresses, who surrounded our vessels like a swarm of bees, on the morning after our arrival. The uproar, scrambling, and confusion created by their eagerness to be the first onboard was truly ridiculous. 'You give me washing Sir! I washed for Capt. Or Mr so-and-so belonging to such and such a ship!' was reiterated by about fifty voices all at once. Of course good looks had much influence in the selection of these sable competitors, who in return are rather prodigal in their favours to those who employ them; incontinence being a general failing along the Coast of Africa, and bought at a very trifling price. To give them their due, I must say, the washing women of Sierra Leone performed their duty as laundresses very creditably, charging about three cut monies (dollars cut into four pieces are called cut money) per dozen.

On Wednesday the 3d of February, at 8.30 p.m., we proceeded down the River in company with the Buzzard: the Etna remaining behind to rate the chronometers, intending to meet me off the Banana Islands, whither I was to repair, after carrying a line of soundings to the edge of the bank in a west direction from Sierra Leone; that part being deficient in soundings.

The Buzzard stood to the southward on her way to the Bight – at 2 a.m. on the 4th I anchored in 8 fms, muddy bottom, in order to wait for observations as a departure. The flood stream here was to the NE<sup>l</sup> and the ebb in a contrary direction; with a rise and fall of 7 feet. As the wind continued very light and unfavourable, I remained at anchor until 2 o'clock, which enabled me to get the lat and longitude at the same spot. The former was 8° 32' 34" N long 13° 28' 7" W. We then weighed and stood away to the WSW, sounding; and at 6.30 p.m. to the NW<sup>l</sup>.

We had a calm nearly the whole of the 5th; anchoring therefore when the NE<sup>l</sup> stream drifted us from our course. At 8 p.m. we got a breeze from the W and weighed, standing to the NW<sup>l</sup>. In sounding with Bunt's Buoy and nipper with much velocity, we found on hauling it in, that the weight of the buoy, caused by the pressure of water against it, before the air was expelled, was such as to bend the brass part of the nipper, which seemed too soft and slight for its purpose. At the suggestion of Capt. Vidal, I afterwards made them of wood altogether, and found them to answer the purpose much better than the originals: the wooded spring, however, lost its elasticity after some time being in use and soaked with water, and therefore required replacing: we occasionally employed Massey's Lead, but only when the others required repair. On the other hand, his Patent Log was always used whenever the vessel's velocity was above 2½ or 3 knots per hour: this is a most admirable instrument and cannot be too highly extolled.

By 8 a.m. on the 6th we reached the edge of soundings, the depth suddenly increasing from 58 to 168 fms. At this time the sun, which had hitherto been obscured by clouds, fortunately shone forth, and were enabled to get several sets of observations for longitude, the result of which was  $14^{\circ} 32' 1''$  N to  $1^{\circ} 17' 79''$  W of the NE<sup>1</sup> battery of Sierra Leone, from whence all the meridian distances were obtained, assuming its longitude as  $13^{\circ} 14' 3''$  W as given in Owen's Tables.<sup>1</sup> We hove to and obtained a meridian observation by which our lat was  $8^{\circ} 38' 05''$  N.

At the edge of the bank, the water was broken & rippling, and we saw two fine turtle floating in it, but they were 'wide-awake', so that pursuit would have been vain. Having thus satisfactorily determined the boundary of the bank in this direction, which is distant  $72\frac{1}{2}$  miles from Cape Sierra Leone, and bearing N85° W from it, we bore away SE, for the Banana Islands, having a fine fresh breeze from the northward. Soundings were taken every 15 minutes and we found them regularly decrease from 30 to 14 fthms sandy bottom.

At 1 a.m. of the 7th I had observations of Jupiter, and the longitude resulting agreed exactly with the run by Patent Log. At day we saw the West Peak of the Banana Islands and the Etna at anchor, and by these we fixed our last position or termination of the line of soundings. Went onboard Etna per signal, taking small chronometers to compare. She had been in this position two or three days, and had been employing her boats in sounding around the Islands, and along the shore from Cape Shilling to Cape York, where there was a deficiency. Having taken breakfast with Capt Vidal, and received my orders, we parted company, the Etna returning to Sierra Leone to rate chronometers, and the Raven proceeding to obtain stock at the Bananas, previous to our making a track survey from Cape St. Ann of Sherbro' to Cape Mesurada, where both vessels were to meet.

We had a light breeze from the westward in the afternoon, with which we reached the west end of Banana, and anchored for the night at 8 o'clock, in 5 fms mud. High Peak bearing SSW, Cape Shilling  $8^{\circ}$  N and about 4 miles from the settlement. Our tide observation gave a fall of  $8\frac{1}{2}$  feet, between high and low water, the former occurring at 9.30 a.m. ... The stream revolved round from east to SW<sup>1</sup> and west during the falling tide, at the rate of  $\frac{1}{2}$  a mile per hour, and then again set to the eastward.

8th February (My Birthday). At daylight there was a light breeze from the southward; and I determined to weigh and get round to the landing place, which is at the eastern extremity of the island. At 6.30 a breeze [of]

<sup>1</sup>W. F. W. Owen, *Tables of Latitudes and Longitudes by Chronometer of places in the Atlantic and Indian Oceans* (London, 1827).

wind suddenly sprung up from the eastward, accompanied with a thick mist, which enveloped Cape Shilling and the high land adjacent: this was nothing more than the Harmitan wind, common, I believe, at this season. Arriving off the settlement we went onshore, in the galley, the cutter heaving to. We beached in a snug and sheltered little cove, just at the foot of the Governor's House. We were met on the beach by the schoolmaster, who is Chief in the Islands, a mulatoo man. He conducted us to the house, lately built by the Governor of Sierra Leone, which contains some very good rooms, having no furniture excepting a few chairs, but neatly painted with green, and having a fine broad balcony all around, admitting the breeze by numerous sashes or shutters.

Having made known our wants to the schoolmaster, he quickly sent to collect the produce of the island, and in a short space of time a market was formed in a square adjoining the Governor's house, used as a playground by the children. While this was going forward, we strolled up their village, and saw the inhabitants gathering from all parts to the market place, with their stock of fowls, vegetables &c. It requires little to convince a stranger that the place is under the wise government of Britain; everything bears an aspect of comparative comfort, cleanliness and regularity. The huts, which are thatched with the leaves of the palm, are built in regular streets, at right angles to each other, the principal of which is called Herbert St. A large bell of London manufacture is suspended between two trees, opposite Government House, and tolls the hour of the day, pointed out by a sun-dial near it. When we thought the market sufficiently assembled we returned and commenced our purchases the schoolmaster regulating all. Being informed of our wants, he selected from the various sellers the required articles, dividing the purchase among them, so that no jealousy should arise. Fowls were 6 pence each, duck on an average 1s 6d, and we got some very nice little pigs from 2s to half a crown, and bananas and yams. Nearly all the inhabitants speak English. The women had their hair very laboriously arranged in different strings of plait, which, from its short woolly nature, must be extremely tedious to accomplish. Most of them were cut in different parts of the face and body. Here, as I have before mentioned was the school for the liberated African boys; nine of which the *Etna* had taken onboard, to be distributed in the two vessels.<sup>1</sup> We noticed two or three cases of leprosy, several of hernia, and the children have very large bellies, perhaps from the nature of their diet. We bought some mats at a very cheap rate, made from the outer peelings of cane, and serve very well to sleep on, instead of sheets, being much cooler.

<sup>1</sup>The *Raven* took three onboard: two aged 7 and one aged 13.

Our hasty bargains being completed, and the school master rewarded for his trouble, we returned onboard and made sail round the west point of the Bananas, and southward over St Ann's Shoals, on our way to the Cape bearing a similar name. The breeze died away and at noon we anchored on one of the numerous shoal patches of which this extensive bank is formed. A light breeze springing up about 1.30 p.m. we weighed and continued our course southward, having a depth from 3 to 10, 11, and 12 fathoms. Another calm obliged us to anchor in a depth of  $5\frac{1}{2}$  fms, sandy bottom. Here we remained until sunrise of the following day, when we were again under all sail, having a fine little breeze from the northward. At 1.30 p.m. we saw the Turtle Islands on our larboard bow, and immediately hauled up for them, which rounding, together with an extensive patch of heavy breakers off the Bar of one of the branches of the Sherbro' River running between Cape St Ann and one of the islands, we anchored in  $4\frac{1}{2}$  fathoms, about 1 mile SW of the Cape, and two cables east of the breakers. The noise of the surf was very great.

Cape St Ann is a sandy point, between which and one of the Turtle Islands, issues a branch of the Sherbro, but there is no passage I believe excepting for canoes, as the river inside consists of an extensive flat with only a few feet upon it. The surf was breaking furiously across this opening, offering to the eye no egress for anything. We could see some canoes on the shore hauled up. Observations this afternoon, gave the longitude of our position  $12^{\circ}57'17''$  West and the variation [blank] west.

There was a calm during the forenoon of Wednesday. A canoe with four men came thro' the surf to us, bringing nothing whatever but two or three dried fish. They were sent back to bring off fruit and vegetables, if by chance we should remain. Observations this morning gave the longitude  $12^{\circ}58'21''$  west, differing a mile from that of yesterday; those of today I preferred. The lat by the noon obs. was  $7^{\circ}33'26''$  N. The time of high water yesterday was 11.30 p.m. this being the last quarter of the moon; it is therefore high water at about 6 o'clock on the full and change days, which agrees with the time specified on the chart by Capt. Owen. There was a set to the westward of about  $\frac{1}{2}$  a knot per hour during the flood, and to the SSE on the ebb; remaining slack about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hours between the change. The rise and fall at this time was  $4\frac{1}{2}$  feet. At 2.30 p.m. a breeze sprang up from the SW<sup>t</sup> when we weighed and stood close alongshore in a depth of between 5 and 6 fathoms. Our course some time was SE by E the coast being a regular line, slightly curved *inwardly*, having a fine steep sandy shore, backed along the whole extent with a thick forest of palm trees, cotton trees, and a variety of creeping and parasitical plants, which bind and interlace these African forests so closely together, as to render them in some places totally impenetrable. No huts were visible on the shore,

and the interior was completely hidden from us. We ran our distances by Massey's Patent Log, and sketched in the coast as we sailed along. I made use of the most prominent trees, to form a triangulation, but this was really unnecessary, as there was a perfect sameness in the coastline. We sounded all along our course, and being so very near the shore we must have been unaffected by any current.

At 6.10 p.m. we anchored for the night in 5 fms water having run a distance of 15 miles from our last position. No current whatever was perceptible until midnight, when there seemed a slight movement to the SE<sup>t</sup>, probably occasioned by the light westerly breeze blowing. In the offing, however, I believe the current sets to the SE<sup>t</sup> at a considerable rate.

11th Feb. 1836. Daylight found us on the move again, pursuing our track survey, our course being to the SE<sup>t</sup> along the shore of Sherbro' Island. At 8 o'clock, after running 8 miles in that direction, the coast suddenly turned to the south, forming, what is called West Bay. In this bend of the coast the beach is a narrow strip enclosing within it a lake of some extent, which in the rainy season probably breaks thro' discharging its superfluous waters into the sea. This projection of land forms the SE<sup>t</sup> extremity of Sherbro' Island, and the west boundary of the entrance of a river, including the united waters of the Sherbro', Yong and Boom Kittam. It is enclosed to the East by P<sup>t</sup> Manna, which is the extremity of a neck of land dividing the Boom Kittam from the ocean and is called 'General Turner's Peninsular'. General Turner was Governor of Sierra Leone, about the year 1826, and made an expedition up the Sherbro' River, in junction with Capt. Owen, to root out a notorious slave dealer of the name of Tucker. He died soon after his return to Sierra Leone, from a fever whose germ was doubtless sown in this expedition. Off this 'sea bar' the sands extend to some distance, on which the surf breaks with violence; but there is a passage into the river, though very narrow, with a depth of two fathoms at low water: this passage lies on the western side. At 11.20 a.m. we anchored with the kedge, having previously had observations for the longitude of the entrance, when Point Manna bore north by compass, distance 1.96 miles. The long. of Point Manna deduced from this position was 12° 32' west and the lat. obtained at anchor of the same point was 7° 22' 18" N. By the observations of Capt. Owen's survey, Pt Manna is placed in lat. 7° 22' 8" and long. 12° 31' 5" W differing only in a trifling degree: but it is very probable our points are not the same exactly: Owen's observations being made onshore, mine at sea.

At noon, we were again underweigh, coasting along General Turner's Peninsular. Here also as before the coast was thickly wooded, and lined with a fine bold sandy beach. Numerous huts and hamlets were studded

along the margin between the wood and the beach, and as we sailed along within half a mile of them, the sable inhabitants came forth to gaze upon us, & holding up a white cloth as a sign that they were willing to trade. The principal occupation of these people dwelling along the shore is, I believe, the collecting of salt, which is obtained by filling pans with sea-water and exposing it to the sun, which quickly evaporates the fluid, leaving the salt. Salt forms a great article of trade along the whole coast of Africa, and is generally the principal commodity brought out by our Liverpool traders to barter with.

Darkness closed our labours, and at 7 pm we anchored in 7 fathoms water  $\frac{3}{4}$  of a mile from a steep sandy beach, thickly wooded behind. We had run 32 miles by Patent Log since noon. The weather continued very fine. In the forenoon the winds were generally light from the NE<sup>l</sup>. At noon it was calm, and at about 10 o'clock PM it sprang up from the WSW and continued so during the rest of the day. Excepting therefore about the middle of the day, when it was calm & variable, the winds always permitted us to sail along the shore without deviating, and our rate was about 4 to 5 miles per hour. At this anchorage we found a constant set to the SE<sup>l</sup> at the rate of about  $\frac{1}{3}$  of a mile per hour. The bottom was a very soft mud.

12th. At 6.30 AM commenced operations, sailing along shore between SE and ESE in a depth of water varying according to our distance from the beach from  $7\frac{1}{2}$  to 5 fms dark mud. Here the palm and cocoa nut trees disappear, excepting now and then a few are visible; but an even growth of thickly intertwined shrubs border the shore without a break; and amid this twisted and luxuriant foliage are seen peeping out numerous dwellings of the sooty tribe. Ahead of us the smoke of fires were often seen, curling above the forest, a signal of the approach of a vessel, which they doubtless took for a trader; and many, I daresay, were the articles prepared for our inspection, with many a disappointment following.

It is the custom of traders thus to coast along, bringing up off the several places which seem to offer a chance of traffic, and few if any men of war approached so near as we did, being often no further than a cables length from the beach. No dangers whatever are found along this part, nor do the rollers break except with one dash against the bold beach. Higher trees rise in the interior, but the country is entirely free from hills. As we sailed along the palm became more numerous, and at 10 o'clock we arrived off the entrance of the River Galinas, the grand emporium of the slave trade about this coast. The entrance to this river is in a line with the shore to the westward; narrow but entirely free from breakers, and opening out in a wide and extensive lagoon in which [are] scattered several islands & some sand banks. The seaward boundary of this sheet of water is a curved

narrow neck of sand or fine gravel, steep to on the seaside. From the masthead I could discern two or three towns upon the islands, and they appear to be of some importance. Many of the liberated slaves in the settlement of Sierra Leone in their endeavours to return to their native homes, are kidnapped and again enslaved by emissaries from this place, who are known sometimes to carry off children found strolling in the woods. By observations in the meridian of this river, I made its longitude  $11^{\circ} 40' 10''$  west Lat about  $7^{\circ}$  N. About noon I anchored about half a mile from the beach, in  $5\frac{1}{2}$  fms water and obtained the latitude. As usual it was calm at this time. The roof of a hut was just visible over a high ridge of sand, and two natives came down to look at us, wondering what we could be; these seemed to be employed in conveying the sea water for making salt. The breeze sprung up from SSW at one o'clock, when we weighed anchor and stood on. The river was now seen coursing into the interior. On its eastern side just within the beach was a town, defended by a palisade of bamboo works, and a lofty cocoa nut tree reared itself like the monarch of the group. We coasted this shore very close and the town sent forth its inmates, who flocked in vast numbers on the beach, gazing with wondering curiosity at the little Raven as she swept along.

[There follows a description of run SSE to Manna Point, and Cape Mount River.]

13th Feb. At 6.30 a.m. got underway and made sail towards the Cape, being anxious to search out a convenient spot for landing, in time to get forenoon observations. From the River of Cape Mount the shore curves round in a SE<sup>l</sup> direction, and more southerly, and projects out in numerous rocky points having small sandy bays between. The prospect of landing was not good, the surf breaking along the whole extent. The wind fell calm and at 9 o'clock I departed in the galley accompanied by the cutter, both boats fully armed, agreeably to the orders received from Captain Vidal, and pulled along [the] shore to the SE until I came to a point which seemed to offer comparatively good landing, and to be well adapted as a station. Still however the surf was very high, and required great caution in approaching the beach. By watching an opportunity, I backed in, and two kroomen immediately jumped out with the instruments which had previously been secured in tarpauline bags, and this was scarcely done before a heavier roller came tumbling in upon us and half filled the boat. We landed however with no other accident than a tolerable good wetting, and the galley with two hands immediately pulled out beyond the reach of the breakers, and kept on their oars off the Point with the cutter, which was there as a reserve, in case of any hostilities on the part of the natives.

On climbing up the rocky steep we perceived a few huts situate[d] among the trees a short distance off, and before I had time to make my artificial horizon, some armed natives came upon us. Their manner and appearance was wild and amazed, and our instruments obviously excited great surprise and consternation. They spoke in a manner which seemed to demand the reason of our being there, but it was quite unintelligible to our kroo-men who tried to explain in their own language, but without success. They then dispatched one or two youths away to their village, which movement I did not exactly like, as I thought it might be for the purpose of obtaining a reinforcement. In a short time, what with signs and a word here and there understood, we became better acquainted, and I found this parley had detained me until it was too late to get any good observations that day, so I gave it up and directed the galley to pull round to the east side of the rocks, where a fine bold sandy beach promised a better embarkation. In the meantime the Raven had taken up a very convenient berth, about 2 cables from the beach, and directly opposite the little village in a depth of water of 5 fathoms. I became such good friends with the natives that I sent the boat off, and accompanied them to their huts, which were built about a hundred yards inland, having a pathway cut thro' the thick underwood and creepers that here grew most luxuriantly. Their village consisted only of about half a dozen huts built of wood and mud plaster and thatched with palm leaves, and these encompassed a little open space of ground, which might be styled their courtyard. One of the buildings, and the largest, was circular with a conical roof, and its windows were barred with iron, giving it the appearance of a prison; and I was inclined to believe it might be a place of confinement for slaves previous to their embarkation onboard the slave vessels: and we had been informed by a canoe to the westward that a vessel was cruising off the Cape, whose Captain was onshore purchasing a cargo of these unfortunate victims.

[There follows a description of the population, buildings and customs of the village.]

On Sunday 14th. I landed and obtained equal altitudes for the meridian distance and latitude: and over against my place of observation a large white disc was painted on a perpendicular rock, that it might be recognised when we came again.

[There follows a description of the village girls' dress, and a short language vocabulary, before an evening departure.]

15th February. At 9 a.m. weighed the kedge and made sail, sounding and sketching the coast. At this time a schooner was seen in the offing, having a very suspicious appearance, and from the information already received I thought it probable she might be a slaver. We therefore bore away under every stitch of sail we could set, to cut her off. She was standing on the starboard tack, with her head to the SW<sup>1</sup> wind light from the NW<sup>1</sup>. It was evident she edged away from us, and soon after as we neared her and hoisted our ensign and pendant, we saw the Portuguese flag waving at her peak. The galley was manned (the wind being very light) and Mr Pike, Second Master, dispatched to board and examine her; and just as she shoved off, I pitched a shot under her bows which immediately brought her to. On hauling up abreast of the schooner, Pike hailed to say she was a slaver, already fitted for victims, but having none onboard. I therefore went to examine her. She was the *Victoria*, Portuguese schooner, or rather I think Spanish, but having papers signed by the Governor of Porto Praya Cape de Verd Islands, and dated the very day of our arrival at that port viz. the 20th of January; and she had sailed from thence the same evening. She was a fine vessel of about 200 tons, and had a complement, according to the papers, of 28 men, consisting principally of Portuguese, and a few Spaniards. Her pretended skipper was by no means an active or dashing looking fellow; and there was little doubt that the true captain was onshore, as report had stated. They pretended to have no knowledge of either the cutter or the *Etna* – although my boat's crew plainly recognised her boatswain, who had abused and spit at them whilst lying off on their oars in Porto Praya. She had been cruising along the coast, by their account, taking in rice and other things, but there was no disguising her intentions, as her slave deck was all laid, her water leaguers filled, and provisions onboard. There were only two guns on deck, lashed round the fore mast, and in bad order. They were very civil, and offered us some English bottled porter and biscuit, and as I could not detain her I parted company, telling the skipper I should be very happy to meet him again when he had taken his cargo in, of which he seemed perfectly innocent and unconscious.

This is the way we are now foiled since the treaty with Spain, which condemns all Spanish or English vessels, if they have only grating hatches, or a larger quantity of water onboard than vessels of that size are used to carry, or shackles and irons onboard, or plank for laying a deck.<sup>1</sup> Being thus completely shut out of a probability of eluding escape if taken, they manage now to obtain a new set of papers from the Governor of the Cape Verds, or else from Ferara the Governor of St Prince's for the payment of

<sup>1</sup>This was the Treaty of 28 June 1835.

one or two hundred dollars, and thus fortified they often elude detention and condemnation, as they are not prizes without slaves actually onboard. The system they carry on is, to take none onboard until all are ready and the number complete, when they are stowed away in two or three hours and the vessel off. There will not be a Spanish flag seen upon the coast in a few months. Many vessels have been taken under the new treaty, but they would not condemn them at Sierra Leone until the Act of Parliament came out,<sup>1</sup> and waiting for this was the cause of so many detained vessels there. It is expected some of the commanders of our cruisers will be cast in damages for unlawful detention, particularly Captain Denman, who detained two vessels according to the new treaty not having it onboard, which is contrary to the stipulations.

A fine breeze sprang up after dismissing the *Victoria*, and as we both stood in towards the land, it was evident we had rather the advantage of sailing. At 5.24 p.m. we passed the entrance of Little Cape Mount River, the longitude of which I made  $11^{\circ} 1' 18''$  W and latitude  $6^{\circ} 33'$  N. At 7 o'clock we anchored in 5 fathoms, about half a mile off a sandy beach. The coast had all the same features as hitherto. Canoes occasionally boarded us with kroo-men onboard.

### Signal book used by H.M. Surveying Vessel *Raven*

Within the Bedford collection there is a signal book written for use specifically in surveying.<sup>2</sup> Although the book carries Bedford's name, it appears to be his personal copy rather than one that he devised. It seems likely that it was devised by Captain Vidal for this surveying voyage because when individuals are named these are from HMS *Etna*, and because it allows communication between an unnamed ship and her boats, as well as between the *Raven*, her cutter and gig. The volume actually contains four codes: compass signals from boats to ship, compass signal from the ship, a harbour code, and a general code for signalling between ship and boats. The last code is reproduced here and allowed quick and precise communication. The code was simple; it consisted of 10 different flags for the numerals 0–9, which could be used in combination to give a signal – e.g. '9' and '4' would render signal '94' from the ship to a boat, 'Land if practicable'.

<sup>1</sup>This eventual Act was: 6 & 7 Will IV c.6, an Act for carrying into effect a Treaty made between His Majesty and the Queen Regent of Spain for the Abolition of the Slave Trade, 30 March 1836.

<sup>2</sup>Royal Naval Museum, Admiralty Library Manuscript MSS 152.

Nos from [Boats to Ship]	A. Signification	Nos from Ship to Boats
[1]	Anchor immediately	1
[2]	Anchor for the night	2
[3]	Anchor Beacon	3
4	Anchor & remain until further orders	4
5	Anchor on edge of bank, shoal or reef as may be	5
6	Anchor and ascertain the rise or fall of tide. Time of high or low water and the velocity.	6
7	Anchor and look out for our guns; we shall fire one minute after dipping our flag	7
8	Anchor – I have lost	8
9	Anchor and take angles when we dip our flag	9
10	Anchor – weigh anchor and follow me	10
15	Ammunition is expended or destroyed	12
16	Angles – I have obtained	13
17	Angles cannot obtain	14
18	Take mast head angles	15
19	Angles – take between boat seen & object	[16]
20	Assistance – armed is wanted	[17]
22	Assistance – medical is wanted	[18]
25	Assistance – carpenter's	19
26	Assist – boat denoted	20
27	Attacked – I have been	21
28	Advance – ship must not until we have sounded more particularly	22
B. 29	Bank – or shoal or reef – there is as denoted	23
30	Bar of river too rough to cross	24
33	Beacon – is sunk	25
35	Beacon – bring it or take it to ship	26
36	Beacon – weigh and take it to next station	27
37	Beacon – take angles at it	28
38	Bottom is sandy – blue vane	29
[39]	Bottom – is rocky. Red vane	30
40	Bottom muddy. Blue over red	31
44	Bearing – on that denoted	32
[45]	Bearing – obtain the true	33
46	Boats – to tow	34

Nos from [Boats to Ship]	A. Signification	Nos from Ship to Boats
47	Boats – up all	35
48	Boats – send off your boats but remain yourself to complete the work you have in hand	36
49	Boats – pick up boats	37
50	Boat is damaged and cannot swim without repair	38
51	Boats – no person to leave the boat	39
52	Boats – send one to be onshore by sunset or hour denoted by next numeral	40
53	Breakers – there are breakers in direction pointed out	41
C. 54	Close – come nearer to us – or to boat pointed out	42
55	Channel – there is a channel	43
59	Coast – keep along the coast and trace its outline by track survey	44
60	Continue	[45]
61	Communicate – I have intelligence to communicate	46
62	Communicate – I wish to communicate	47
63	Communicate – I could not	48
64	Communicate – I have not communicated	49
66	Current. There is a current setting strong against you, unless otherwise expressed by compass signal	50
69	Chronometers – to be wound at noon to be compared	51
70	Chronometers – I wish you to compare with me	52
71	Danger. You are standing into.	53
72	Discontinue work	54
73	Disregard my motions	55
E. 74	Examine – breakers as denoted	56
77	Examine – Bar of River near us	57
[7]9	Go to	58

Nos from [Boats to Ship]	A. Signification	Nos from Ship to Boats
80	Guns – we are going to measure base by sound – look out for our guns	59
81	Guns – your guns I did not hear	60
H. 82	Hour denoted	61
I. 83	Indistinct – stations or points are indistinct	62
84	Indistinct – your signals are	63
88	Island	64
89	Inside	65
K. 90	Keep close luff	66
91	Keep more away	67
92	Keep on starboard bow	68
93	Keep on larboard bow	69
L. 94	Land – if practicable	70
95	Landing do not run any risk in	71
96	Latitude – try to obtain the	72
97	Latitude – have you obtained it	73
98	Leads & lines, my leads and lines are lost	74
M. 99	Mast is sprung	75
100	Mark whitewash	76
105	Meals – go to	77
O. 106	Oars – use your oars. If they are not out – it is intended you should lay them in.	78
P. 107	Point – as per bearing	80
108	Proceed as denoted	81
109	Proceed along shore and look out for a place where we can land	82
110	Safe – passage over the bar is safe	83
115	Sail – make all sail: if under sail take it in.	84
116	Sail – do not carry so much	85
117	Ship	86
118	Slip your cable	87
119	Sound and report the depth quickly	88
150	Sound constantly	89
155	Sound. Take a line of soundings on direction denoted	90
159	Sound. Take up a station for measuring base by sound	91

Nos from [Boats to Ship]	A. Signification	Nos from Ship to Boats
160	Sound on short traverses	92
166	Sound on long traverses	93
169	Sound. Go ahead and sound	94
170	Spread yourselves more.	95
177	Spread your awning.	96
179	Station – build a station or erect poles, or some mark as most practicable	97
180	Stranger – there is one inside here	98
188	Stranger is suspicious like a slaver	99
189	Stranger is an English vessel	100
190	Shorten in cable and be ready to weigh	101
195	Shoal – we are on a shoal	102
196	Shoal – there is one in direction pointed out, sound it and report depth	103
197	Sunset. Return at sunset	104
198	Steer more to starboard	105
199	Steer more to port	106
200	Tack	107
205	Unable to obey signal or orders	108
206	Unable to land	109
207	Unable to pull up	110



## VII

### THE JOURNAL OF LIEUTENANT CHARLES KNOWLES IN THE RIVER NIGER, 1864

*Edited by*  
*Robert Wilson*

Command of a 'gunboat' in the nineteenth century provided valuable experience for the Royal Navy's junior officers. On the West Africa station the duties carried out by such vessels included intercepting slave runners at sea, close blockade of slave ports, exploration, trade security and the furtherance of British foreign policy in the region. One of these vessels, HMS *Investigator*,<sup>1</sup> was built for, and spent its entire short career on the West Africa station. Amongst its many tasks was an annual ascent of the Niger River in support of the Niger Expedition primarily under Dr Baikie<sup>2</sup> based at Lokoja, the settlement at the confluence of the Niger and Benue Rivers.

The Niger Expeditions of 1854 and 1857 were reviewed in a Foreign Office note which summarised the purposes of the expeditions as being:

first organised with a view to ascertain if it would be profitable to navigate the river and if so how far, whether it would be practicable to develop a legitimate trade and by doing so to strike at the root of the foreign slave trade and generally to prepare the minds of the native chiefs for entering commercial relations with European traders.<sup>3</sup>

By 1864 the Foreign Office considered that the work of Dr Baikie, who had been resident at Lokoja since 1857, had largely achieved the purposes and expectations outlined above, and it was time for him to be relieved. In consequence, *Investigator*, under the command of Lieutenant Charles

<sup>1</sup>TNA, ADM 135/253 Length 121ft 0in between perpendiculars, 110ft 1¾in keel for tonnage; breadth 16ft 0in; depth in hold 7ft 3¼in; 149bm; 34 nominal horse power; 2 guns.

<sup>2</sup>K. O. Dike, *Trade and Politics in the Niger Delta* (Oxford, 1956). William Balfour Baikie: b. Kirkwall, Orkney, 1825. Graduated in medicine at Edinburgh; entered Royal Navy 1848; Asst. Surgeon at Haslar Hospital, 1851–54; commanded the Niger Expedition, 1854; author of *Narrative of an Exploring Voyage up the Rivers Kwo'ra and Bi'nue* (London, 1856); commanded the Niger Expedition, 1857; remained in the interior on the loss of the *Dayspring* during 1857 expedition and founded the first British Government post at Lokoja; departed Lokoja onboard HMS *Investigator* 1864; d. 1864.

<sup>3</sup>TNA, FO 97/435. Foreign Office note reviewing the Niger Expeditions.

George Frederick Knowles,<sup>1</sup> was ordered to take Lieutenant Henry S. Bouchier, Royal Marine Light Infantry<sup>2</sup> to Lokoja to take command there in Baikie's stead. In addition to Bouchier, *Investigator* carried other passengers, the most important being Bishop Samuel Crowther,<sup>3</sup> the first consecrated African bishop, who was being taken to his diocese on the Niger. The site of Crowther's first church is today marked by a white cross on the banks of the Niger opposite modern Lokoja.

Throughout *Investigator*'s ascent of the Niger in 1864, Knowles kept a detailed journal containing a narrative of the voyage and a comprehensive study of the people met and places visited. A résumé of the ascent was published in the Royal Geographical Society journal in January 1865.<sup>4</sup> The original of Knowles's journal is held in the United Kingdom Hydrographic Office,<sup>5</sup> and it is this that is reproduced in part here.

### Exploration of the Niger River

The Niger River's history is well documented.<sup>6</sup> For Britain in the nineteenth century it had two distinct elements: the first, of exploration,

<sup>1</sup>TNA, ADM 196/36 and 40. Sir Charles George Frederick Knowles Bart. Mate 1851; promoted acting Lt. of *Fox* during the latter part of the Burmese War in a death vacancy, 1852–53, Burmese Medal; Lt. 1854; *Raven* in command 1856; received the thanks of the Admiralty for the salvage of the *Ardent* when stranded on the West Coast of Africa, 1858; *Investigator* in command 1864, Niger Expedition August to October 1864, invalided from Ascension Is 1864; Cdr 1865; 1872 received the thanks of the Admiralty for his services on the coast of Cuba during the insurrection; received the thanks of the Colonial Office for services on the Newfoundland fisheries while in command of *Lapwing*; married Mary Ellen Thomson 1872; Capt. 1872; Captain's GS Pension, March 1886 to March 1887, when he retired; succeeded his father as 4th baronet, 1892.

<sup>2</sup>TNA, ADM 196/60, Henry Seton Bouchier, b. 1843; 2nd Lt. RMLI 1859; 1st Lt. 1862; commanded RMLI detachment for the protection of Cape Coast Castle during Ashanti War 1863; British government representative at Lokoja 1864; Capt. 1876; Maj. 1881; Egypt, awarded Khedives Star and 4th Class Osmanieh 1882; Brevet Lt. Col. 1887; Lt. Col. 1889; ret. 1891; d. 1925.

<sup>3</sup>A. F. Mockler-Ferryman, *British Nigeria* (London, 1900), pp. 273–5. Bishop Samuel Crowther, b. 1810, original name Adjai; taken into slavery at Oshogun, Yarubaland, 1821; sent onboard a Portuguese slave ship which was captured by HMS *Myrmidon*; freed at Sierra Leone and educated at a missionary school in Bathurst; christened Samuel Crowther 1825; tutored Fourah Bay College, Sierra Leone, 1835; to England to prepare for ordination 1842, ordained 1843; assisted in the foundation of a mission in Yoruba 1845; Niger Expedition 1854; consecrated first Bishop of the Niger Territories 1864.

<sup>4</sup>C. G. F. Knowles, 'Ascent of the Niger in September and October 1864', *Royal Geographical Society*, 9 (1865), 72–5.

<sup>5</sup>UK Hydrographic Office (UKHO) archive reference OD489.

<sup>6</sup>For discussion on the exploration of West Africa and the Niger River see Sir A. Burns, *History of Nigeria* (London, 1969); M. Crowder, *The Story of Nigeria* (London, 1962); D. Hollett, *The Conquest of the Niger by Land and Sea* (Abergavenny, 1995); C. Lloyd, *The Search for the Niger* (London, 1973); Mockler-Ferryman, *British Nigeria*.

beginning with the Scotsman Mungo Park;<sup>1</sup> the second, that of exploitation and trade, beginning with MacGregor Laird.<sup>2</sup> The source of the Niger River had puzzled European geographers and explorers for many centuries before Mungo Park first sighted the river at Sego in July 1796. Sent out by the African Society of London, Park descended the river as far as Silla before returning to the Gambia and thence to London in 1799. He returned in 1805 with the aim of tracing the river's course to the sea only to be drowned in the Niger, shooting the Yauri rapids near Bussa whilst being attacked by local tribesmen.

The baton was taken up by Hugh Clapperton RN<sup>3</sup> who in 1822 ventured south from Tripoli but failed to gain the river; attempting for a second time in 1825 from Badagry he, with his servant, Richard Lemon Lander,<sup>4</sup> reached Bussa, only to die at Sokoto in 1827. Richard Lander, with his brother John, was sent out again in 1830, by the Secretary of State, Lord Bathurst, and having travelled overland from Badagry to Bussa ventured 100 miles upstream before turning and following the river's course to the sea at the entrance to the Nun River.

The Niger's African name is the Joliba or Quorra and it has a great tributary, the Benue or Tchadda River. The awe-inspiring confluence of these two great rivers is close by the settlement of Lokoja, whence the Niger flows south to emerge at the sea through the rivers of the Niger Delta. The Niger Delta or the Oil Rivers had been known by European traders since the early sixteenth century, although ships had not ventured

<sup>1</sup>Hollett, *The Conquest of the Niger*. Mungo Park, b. 1771; Edinburgh University 1789; Asst. Surgeon HEICS Worcester 1792; to the Gambia 1795; exploring the interior of Africa, discovered the Niger at Sego the first European to do so 1796; returned to England 1797; married 1799; sailed for African exploration 1805; killed by natives whilst shooting the Bussa Rapids on the Niger River 1806.

<sup>2</sup>Hollett, *The Conquest of the Niger*. MacGregor Laird, b. 1809; partner in the foundation of the African Inland Commercial Company (AICC) to trade on the Niger River, sailed with AICC ships *Quorra*, *Alburkah* and *Columbine* for an exploration and trading voyage to the Niger River 1832; expedition returned to England having lost 39 of the 48 Europeans in the expedition, 1834; Secretary Birkenhead Dock Company 1846; bankrupt 1849; director of the African Steamship Company (ASC) founded by Royal Charter 1852; ASC sent out *Pleaid* expedition in 1854 and *Dayspring* expedition 1857; d. 1861.

<sup>3</sup>W. L. Clowes, *The Royal Navy*, Vol. 6, p. 519. Hugh Clapperton, b. 1788; pressed into the Navy; Lt. 1815; Cdr 1825. Lloyd, *The Search for the Niger*, 77ff: 1821–25 Niger overland expedition from Tripoli with Denham and Oudney; 1825–27 Niger overland expedition from Badagry with Lander, d. 13 April 1827 at Sokoto.

<sup>4</sup>Hollett, *The Conquest of the Niger*: Richard Lemon Lander, b. 1804; educated Old Pascoes School, Truro; servant to a merchant in the West Indies returning to England in 1818; in service to Maj. Colebrooke Royal Artillery at Cape Colony 1823–24; servant to Clapperton during Niger Expedition 1825; returned to England after Clapperton's death in 1827; 1830 led Niger Expedition, accompanied by his brother John, followed course of the Niger to the sea allowing trade on the Niger River to be developed, returned to England 1831; sailed with MacGregor Laird expedition of 1832; died at Nun River from a gunshot wound received during an attack by natives 1834.



- IV 'The Rivers Kwóra [Quorra] and Binue [Benue] with adjoining Countries as far as at present known', map drawn by John Arrowsmith, 1856. The first chart of the Kwóra and Binue rivers was produced in 1855; this copy of Arrowsmith's map was received in the Hydrographic Office three months after Knowles's expedition was concluded.

further than 20 to 30 miles upstream. The joining of the river from its source to the sea by Lander allowed its exploitation to begin.<sup>1</sup>

First in this quest was a private expedition in 1832, led by Mr Macgregor Laird, 'to open a direct communication with the interior of Africa, and if this were successful to establish a permanent settlement at the junction of the Tchadda and Niger, for the purpose of collecting

<sup>1</sup>The Niger Expeditions between 1832 and 1857 are adequately covered in Mockler-Ferryman, *British West Africa*, and W. M. N. Geary, *Nigeria Under British Rule* (London, 1965).

various products of the country'.<sup>1</sup> Two small steam vessels were employed, the *Quorra* and the *Alburkah*.<sup>2</sup> The expedition ended with a severe loss of life with only nine Europeans surviving of the 48 who had set out on the expedition. Lander too was lost, having received gunshot wounds from which he died at Fernando Po. Among the survivors was Lieutenant William Allen<sup>3</sup> who had been appointed by the Admiralty to survey the river.<sup>4</sup>

### England's Interest in the Niger Region in the Late Nineteenth Century

By the time of *Investigator*'s operations in West Africa and the Niger in particular, the British government's policy was to ensure the final demise of the exportation of slaves from Africa, with the Royal Navy as its primary instrument of enforcement. Colonisation of the region was being firmly rejected by the British government; however, commercial development of this fertile area was seen as being of great benefit to Britain's burgeoning industries. Manufactured goods from Britain could be traded for much-needed raw materials including palm oil and cotton. Commercial development of the Niger region brought one great potential benefit in aiding this policy: manpower was needed to harvest palm oil and other crops required by the European traders. Native manpower to produce African goods for export would be insufficient if the labouring population was constantly being exported as slaves; they were needed in Africa by Africans. Retention of native labour in Africa arguably retained slavery in Africa but it was slavery of a different and less public kind and one apparently acceptable to Britain, at least in the short term. The ever increasing effectiveness of the close blockade of slave ports was forcing native rulers to look for alternative means of trade. Thus the combination of legitimate trade and blockade was eventually to clear slavery from the region.

<sup>1</sup>TNA, FO 97/434 Foreign Office note.

<sup>2</sup>Hollett, *The Conquest of the Niger*, p. 77, *Quorra*, 112ft long, 8ft draught, 45hp; *Alburkah*, 70ft long, 6½ft draught, 16hp. In Dike, *Trade and Politics in the Niger Delta*, p. 62, these were the first ocean-going iron steamers ever built and Laird stated 'It was generally allowed that better-found vessels had never left the port of Liverpool'.

<sup>3</sup>L. S. Dawson, *Memoirs of Hydrography*, Part II (Eastbourne, 1885), William Allen, FRS (?1790–1864): entered RN 1805; Lt. 1815; Niger Expedition 1832; Cdr 1834; Niger Expedition 1841, after heavy loss of life Allen became the senior officer but received orders to terminate the expedition on the eve of the day fixed to re-ascend the river; Charts from his work were the 'Kwarra River from the Sea to Rabba, with part of the Chadda River' and 'Cameroon River, with plans of Ambas and Nicoll Islands'; Capt. 1842; d. 1864.

<sup>4</sup>Mockler-Ferryman, *British Nigeria*, pp. 29–31.

### *Investigator's service and ascents of the Niger*

Although sold out of service in 1869 after only eight years in commission, *Investigator* had 11 Commanding Officers, Knowles being fourth in the line. Built to a design by the Controller's department in dry dock at Deptford Yard as an 'exploring vessel for Gabon River',<sup>1</sup> *Investigator* was floated out on 16 November 1861,<sup>2</sup> commissioned by Lieutenant B. L. Lefroy at Woolwich on 14 December the same year, and sailed from Plymouth for the West Coast of Africa on 11 February 1862,<sup>3</sup> almost eight months to the day after being laid down. Her sailing qualities were noted as 'very inferior draft of water being so small'.<sup>4</sup> *Investigator's* entire naval service was spent on the West Africa Station on patrol duty, despatch service and general duties. River work was a common feature of her employment, including eight ascents of the Niger River made annually between 1862 and 1868, usually in the flood period of September and October.<sup>5</sup> Only one bid to ascend the river outside of this period was ventured, when, in December 1866, an attempt was made to take the new Consul, Mr Lyons McLeod, who had missed the annual ascent in September, to his appointment at Lokoja. The fall in the level of the river and hostile tribesmen forced the *Investigator* to abandon the task at Tudor Island and return the following season. Unrest on the river spread into 1867 and 1868. Ascending the river in August 1867, *Investigator* grounded at Jublana where for six days the vessel came under heavy and constant rifle-fire from natives. Being surrounded by armed canoes and under threat of boarding, the ship was lightened by jettisoning most of the stores which enabled her to float clear of the shoals and proceed up river to Lokoja and safety. The settlement at Lokoja was in turn blockaded and attacked between December 1867 and July 1868. *Investigator* arrived in August soon after the blockade was lifted by native allies paid by the Consul. The ship now entered the Benue River and at Atipo engaged and dispersed the hostile forces responsible for the blockade. This was *Investigator's* last ascent of the river, she was sold out of service to the local authorities in Lagos in 1869.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>1</sup>TNA, ADM 135/253.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid.

<sup>3</sup>TNA, ADM 53/8610.

<sup>4</sup>TNA, ADM 53/8613.

<sup>5</sup>TNA, ADM 53/8610–16 and ADM 53/9335–36. Lt. Lefroy 31 Aug. to 24 Oct. 1862; Lt. Gambier 6 Sept. to 15 Oct. 1863; Lt. C. G. F. Knowles 28 Aug. to 19 Oct. 1864; Lt. G. T. Murrell 2 to 6 Sept. and 2 Oct. to 29 Oct. 1865; Lt. J. W. Jones 26 Sept. to 26 Oct. 1866; Lt. A. A. Hay 26 Jul. to 9 Sept. 1867; Lt. J. H. O'Brian 31 Jul. to 20 Sept. 1868.

<sup>6</sup>TNA, ADM 135/253. 'The *Investigator* was sold with her machinery by Public Auction at Lagos on 21 June 1869 to the Colonial Government for £460 vide letter of 27 Aug. 1869 from the Colonial Office. However, from a report from Commodore Dowell dated 2 Sept. 1869 it appears that the vessel was sold for £472 10s 0d'.

## Charles George Frederick Knowles

Knowles's service record shows him promoted Mate in 1851 and Lieutenant in 1853. His ability came to the notice of senior officers during previous service on the West Africa Station when he was commended for his 'indefatigable exertions on the *Ardent*<sup>1</sup> getting on shore' in 1858. Command of *Investigator* was his last appointment, before being promoted Commander in March 1865 and, from the reports arising from the Niger River task, it was possibly the final push to promotion. Commodore Wilmot 'transmitted strong testament to the valuable services rendered by him during the Niger expedition' whilst Bishop Crowther and Dr Baikie both testified to his zeal and intelligence.<sup>2</sup> His journal shows a conscientious and careful officer with a keen sense of humour. A less pleasant side is shown when 'An interpreter came off to see us whom we made drink the Queen's health in port although he was a mahomedan'. Whether navigating his vessel under often difficult circumstances in unfamiliar waters, engaged in negotiations with native kings and chiefs, or in good or indifferent health, he always found the opportunity for detailed observations of the country around him and its people. Whilst it is not included here in this abridged version, he writes in detail of the ways of the people of Africa in a predominately dispassionate style. Maintaining such a record must have been difficult but the standard of writing, content, and high degree of observation is maintained until the end of the journal on his return to Lagos.

## Problems of Ship Management on the Niger River

The peculiar management problems of commanding an independent vessel in a potentially hostile river environment far removed from any form of support are well illustrated in Knowles's journal. The main areas of concern were fuel, water, food, health, security, and navigation.

*Investigator* was a small vessel with a limited coal capacity and a relatively high fuel-consumption rate. Various methods were used both to conserve fuel and to provide additional stocks. For example, on the passage from Lagos, the ship's base port, to the entrance of the Nun River from where the Niger was reached, in order to reduce consumption the vessel was under tow of another steamer. Further, additional stocks of coal were taken from the towing steamer as both deck cargo and to

<sup>1</sup>D. Lyon and R. Winfield, *The Sail and Steam Navy List* (London, 2004). Length 164ft 0in between perpendiculars, 142ft 6in keel for tonnage; breadth 32ft 8in; depth in hold 18ft 7in; 800bm; 878 displacement; 200 nominal horse power; 4 guns.

<sup>2</sup>TNA, ADM 196/36.

provide a fuel dump at the Nun River factory for the return passage to Lagos. Carrying additional stocks meant added problems for the ship's commanding officer. In 1864, Knowles, on entering the Nun River, had in tow a cargo boat loaded with 15 tons of coal from the *Rattlesnake* and an additional 5 tons as deck cargo; he comments, 'besides what we already had, this with our own provisions and stores for Dr Baikie, Lieutenant Bouchier and Bishop Crowther, pretty well crowded our own deck'. The vessel was now deep in the water and with the addition of the tow Knowles expressed concern about crossing the bar. Having offloaded 10 tons of coal to a beach inside the river and temporarily unloaded additional stores to the trading vessel *Manchester*, *Investigator* returned over the bar the following morning to take on an additional 16 tons from the *Rattlesnake*. On commencing the ascent of the river *Investigator* had 40 tons of coal, 15 in the cargo boat towing astern, 9 in the bunkers and 16 in bulk on the upper deck. She was now deeply laden drawing 5ft 4in aft and 4ft 10in forward with the least thing giving the ship a list. The additional draught put such strain on the paddles that every other float was removed to ease the problem.

On the 6 September, only six days into the 53 days spent in the river, fuel was already a concern as Knowles states:

By a mixture of wood and coal we are saving 2 cwt an hour. This if kept up will be 16 miles gained in every 12 hours. We were done out of 11 bags of coal, when coaling from the *Rattlesnake*, besides several not properly filled. This is a very important matter in a river journey of some hundred miles.

One can only assume that some strong words on the subject of coal stocks passed between the officers of both ships on the return to Lagos. Only one day later the cargo boat was cleared of coal and the ship was noted as being much lighter. That night wood is embarked as 'from here we have a long distance yet to accomplish and our coal is getting scanty'. On arrival at Lokoja Knowles unloads 3 tons of coal to save for the return journey and employed the ship's company splitting and storing wood which would be the main fuel source and a preoccupation for the rest of the time on the river. Although the banks of the Niger River and surrounding country were well covered in trees it was not always easy to procure sufficient stocks of wood and Knowles commented on the collection of wood almost daily when onboard *Investigator*. Despite having left reserves of coal at Lokoja, and at the entrance to the Nun River, *Investigator* was reduced to burning coal bags shortly before arrival in Lagos Roads and immediately on arrival there took in ten bags of coal from *Leander*.

Allen had conducted survey work on the Niger and Benue Rivers in 1841, from which was produced a chart of the 'Kwarra River from the Sea to Rabba, with part of the Chadda River'. Lieutenant J. H. Glover RN<sup>1</sup> was appointed to the Niger Expedition<sup>2</sup> of 1857 during which time he succeeded in surveying the navigable length of the Niger and a substantial length of the Benue Rivers. Knowles was to benefit from the excellent work of these capable and dedicated officers by having a set of seven charts covering the navigable sections of the rivers that he was required to traverse. The rivers in question are often of immense breadth, with fast currents, subject to regular flooding of their banks and inundations of islands; their depths and channels are far from being fixed and predictable. Knowles often found good agreement with the published charts; however, uncharted islands, minor rivers, creeks, shoals, and bends in the river were frequently encountered. Debris brought down on the river tended to form into large 'floating islands' barely distinguishable from genuine islands. Currents were often unpredictable and changes unexpected, such that they were often only detected when they were felt in handling the vessel.

All of this required immense concentration on the part of the officers and quartermasters whenever the vessel was underway on the river. In one period of five hours *Investigator* negotiated 66 bends in the river. Groundings were commonplace during each ascent and it is testament to the design and build of the vessel that there was no critical damage. Comments such as 'The island of Ojipo has been washed away for two years and it was a submerged portion of this upon which we struck', and 'touched at the southern extremity of Nevilli island but reversing in time deepened our water and proceeded', are found throughout the journal. On rejoining *Investigator* after a protracted absence, Knowles comments that the vessel's progress downriver was easily distinguishable, other remarks

<sup>1</sup>Dawson, *Memoirs of Hydrography*, Part II, and *The Times*, Obituary dated 30 Oct. 1885: John Hawley Glover, GCMG: entered RN 1841; HM Surveying Vessel *Beacon* 1842; Lt. 1851; *Otter* in command 1855; Cdr 1862; Administrator of the Government of Lagos 1863–64 and 1866–72; Special Commissioner to the Gold Coast 1873; GCMG 1874; married Elizabeth Rosetta Scott 1876; Retired Capt. 1878; Gov. of Newfoundland 1876–81; Gov. of The Leeward Islands 1881–83; d. 1885.

<sup>2</sup>Dike, *Trade and Politics in the Niger Delta*, 'Niger Expedition 1857': The British government and MacGregor Laird, 'recognised as the authority on Niger questions', entered into a contract on 1 January 1857 whereby Laird was to 'maintain a steamer on the river for five years at a subsidy of £8,000 the first year, diminishing annually by £500 to £6,000 in the fifth year. The vessel built for this work was the *Dayspring* with Baikie in command of the first ascent in 1857. Hollett, *The Conquest of the Niger*, p. 204, *Dayspring* 80ft long, 5ft draught, 30hp; built in 1857 as the first regular steamer on the Niger River after its initial exploration voyage in 1857; in collision with a Prussian barque five days after sailing from England; entered the Brass River 6 Jul. 1857 for the ascent of the Niger; wrecked on rocks off Jebba Island, Niger River, 1858; *Dayspring* survivors recovered by *Sunbeam* in Oct. 1858.

regarding clearing debris from trees and bushes out of the rigging and off the upper deck indicate that the vessel frequently navigated very close in to the river banks. Ship handling for prolonged periods is extremely exacting, to conduct it in confined waters for days on end in barely adequately charted waters must have taken its toll on Knowles.

Before *Investigator* entered the Nun River in 1864 it was well known and accepted that the most dangerous part of the ascent was in the Niger Delta area up to about 70 miles from the sea. Large war canoes often mounting a three-pounder gun in the bows and with crews of up to 40 natives, armed with guns,<sup>1</sup> were routinely encountered in the Niger Delta or Oil Rivers. Such canoes could achieve a high speed and frequently displayed the ability to keep pace with steamers over distances of a mile or more. Having left the Delta region astern, vessels were far less likely to be attacked. On commencing his ascent Knowles 'hoisted a white ensign at the Fore, in order show the natives whose villages we were likely to pass the friendly object of our visit'. He was later to haul down this ensign as he doubted that the natives understood its meaning. Boarding nets were rigged when in night anchorages and extra lookouts posted; additionally, the *Investigator* found an anchorage away from villages. Security measures were relaxed on the upper reaches of the river but not forgotten.

Food and water whilst sometimes difficult to obtain in any quantity were among the least of Knowles's problems. Dr Baikie and his excellent knowledge of the region, local contacts, and most importantly the friendly relations with the Kings and Chiefs in the locality ensured that an adequate supply was maintained. Welcome gifts of food were frequently received as part of an exchange of gifts between Dr Baikie, his successor Lieutenant Bouchier, Knowles and the Kings and Chiefs.

### Editing and Reading Knowles's Journal

The journal is entered into a bound notebook and it is not clear if this is the account as written during the expedition or transcribed from notes and the ship's log at a later date. The notebook is in good condition and shows little of the wear or staining that might be expected from use as an original

<sup>1</sup>D. R. Headrick, *The Tools of Empire* (Oxford, 1981), pp. 105–14; guns had been given to the natives of West Africa in exchange for slaves almost from the start of the trade, the guns themselves were in turn used to capture yet more slaves. The weapons, known colloquially as 'Dane Guns', were almost invariably of inferior quality being more dangerous to the user than the target. They were exported in large numbers from European countries. In 1829, Britain exported 52,540 guns to West Africa, this number rising in the 1860s to between 100,000 and 150,000 guns per annum from Birmingham alone. During the period 1845 to 1889, Africa received between 6.3 and 17.8 per cent of all British gun exports.

working document. The handwriting is clear and uniform throughout, tending to the impression that the journal in the Hydrographic Office was written up from contemporary notes. The clear hand made transcription a straightforward task; the few words which are in doubt have been omitted and are noted '[word]' in the edited text.

Knowles's original journal ran to almost 28,000 words of which approximately two-thirds have been retained in this edited version. The matter removed in editing has in the main been repetitious or of minimal interest to the narrative; all omissions are indicated by '...'. The text has been produced following the original script with some modernisation of the English spelling according to the Society rules; spellings of native personal and place names have been left unaltered. Punctuation has not been altered as it is an integral part of Knowles's literary style.

### 1. 26 August – sailed from Lagos

HM Ship *Investigator* under my command left Lagos in company with HM Ship *Rattlesnake*,<sup>1</sup> Commodore A. P. E. Wilmot C.B. At 3.30 p.m. on the 26th August. Arrived off the mouth of the Nun [river] on the afternoon of the 28th.

### 2. 29 August – entered the Nun River

The wind moderate from the westward but with a heavy sea on and drizzling rain, at times quite obscuring the land. Commenced coaling the cargo boat from the *Rattlesnake*, which was loaded with fifteen tons in bulk and also five tons in bags on our own deck, besides what we already had, this with our own provisions and stores for Dr Baikie, Lieutenant Bouchier and Bishop Crowther, pretty well crowded our own deck. Towards the afternoon the weather came on so thick, that I almost despaired of getting in, I was also anxious about the state of the Bar as the vessel was very deep, however at about 1.30 p.m. the mist lifted and the rain eased and we weighed and steamed in over the Bar, towing the cargo boat by a 7 inch hawser, middled to make two parts. We kept the marks on as Glover's chart viz., Trotter Point open a ship's length to the westward of Palm Point, NNE, and got 2¼ fms on the Bar. It is a very long one in extent and if breaking we should have to pass ten or more rollers, but fortunately there was hardly a break and the soundings perfectly agreed with those laid down. We came in on the top of high water, but the ebb

<sup>1</sup>Lyon and Winfield, *The Sail and Steam Navy List*, *Rattlesnake*. Length 225ft 0in between perpendiculars, 196ft 8in keel for tonnage; breadth 40ft 8in; draught 18ft 7in (fwd), 20ft 4in (aft); 1,705 bm; 2,451 displacement; 200 nominal horse power; 21 guns.

did not meet us on the Bar, and indeed we were swung to the Flood  $\frac{3}{4}$  hour after anchoring. The western breakers seem the heaviest, the eastern ones were hardly apparent; they say that close to these the deepest water is to be found, but I should always be guided by the marks we came in on. On entering the river we fired two guns in return to two with which were saluted by the British schooner *Manchester*<sup>1</sup> which was dressed with flags to welcome us. At 3.15 p.m. we stopped and by the courteous permission of Captain Derecourt, lashed alongside the *Manchester* and discharged all the baggage and stores to her pro tem. We then anchored close to the shore in 4 fms, opposite the site of the new factory in course of erection by the West African Company,<sup>2</sup> and landed ten tons of coal in bags on the beach. These we covered over with empty coal bags and calabar mats, and palm branches outside. This store is intended for our return to Lagos. The intended factory is to be of iron, the materials and workmen were brought down a month since by the *Manchester*, but during that time, Captain Derecourt says that not a gallon of palm oil has yet made its appearance. The remains of Laird's old factory are still to be seen on the opposite shore, on which side the water is very smooth with no current but quite shut in from the sea breezes. Palm Point is so named on account of the numerous palm trees that line the shore which is sandy; but until you near them they are not visible among the thick foliage. ... The chiefs of Akassa a village not far below us, near where the mission house is situated came onboard shortly after we anchored. The headman, Francisco, calls himself a pilot for the Bar, but I should prefer acting in that capacity myself. They only seemed pervious to the 'lot a' rum' to which until they received a quantum they made constant allusion. We moored the cargo boat to the *Manchester* with an AB, 4 Kroomen<sup>3</sup> and the dingy, there is drizzling rain

<sup>1</sup>Vessel in the palm oil trade, details unknown.

<sup>2</sup>Dike, *Trade and Politics in the Niger Delta*, p. 178. The West African Company was one of the earliest companies set up to trade in the Niger Delta. A number of other companies were set up in the 1860s to trade in the Niger Delta region; these being (1) The River Niger Navigation and Trading Company, (2) Company of African Merchants, (3) The Anglo-African Company, (4) The African Merchants of Bristol, (5) The Merchants of London and Liverpool trading to the West Coast of Africa. A common plea from these companies to the British government at this time was for a financial subsidy to their operations 'in performing a great national duty in clearing a great commercial highway [River Niger] for others of their countrymen'. Burns, *History of Nigeria*, p. 148. The West African Company merged with other companies in 1879 to form the United African Company.

<sup>3</sup>Hollett, *The Conquest of the Niger*, p. 83, Kroomen were Africans recruited at Freetown; 'noted for their loyalty, bravery, and skill as sailors', they were employed for service onboard naval and merchant vessels to supplement the crews of vessels on the West African coast thereby reducing the losses of British and European sailors through disease. TNA, ADM 8 shows that every ship on the West Africa station had a complement of Kroomen; figures abstracted from these records show the total number of Kroomen employed in all ships on the station averaging 319 per month in the period January 1861 to December 1869.

setting in, but a threatening appearance which came on in the afternoon, has cleared off although it lightens occasionally. ... The night is very still and cloudy with a light air from WSW thermometer 76°. Nothing to be heard but the monotonous hum of the tree and marsh frogs and crickets. The mosquitoes have hardly had time to come off yet.

### 3. 30 August – Nun River

Weighed at 5 a.m. and proceeded out of the river. ... The marks were very distinct and the sea remarkably smooth with fine clear weather. Passed the line of the ebb tide first inside the shoal water and crossed the Bar at 6.15 a.m. The least water 2 fms. I think there is no doubt that the river falls before the ebb makes down. Having received 16 tons more coal from the *Rattlesnake* and Commodore Wilmot having given me his final orders with some handsome presents for King Masaba,<sup>1</sup> we received Bishop Crowther and suite, Lieutenant Bouchier, RMLI, to succeed Dr. Baikie, and Lieutenant Sandys of the *Rattlesnake* as second-in-command of the expedition, and weighed at 12.45 p.m., crossed the Bar at 1.25 p.m. Least water 2½ fms firing a gun as a signal to the *Rattlesnake* also another at 1.45 p.m. on entering the river. Steamed up to Trotter Point and anchored in 4¼ fms off the Factory at 2.10 p.m. Observed *Rattlesnake* weigh and proceed to the westward under steam and fore and aft sails. ... It now came on to rain and continued drizzling until 7 p.m. which prevented us from reshipping our stores from the *Manchester* but we landed a few more bags of coal to make up the 10 tons. The ebb tide made out at 4.30 p.m. The chiefs of Akassa came on board and brought the copy of the treaty concluded with them last year,<sup>2</sup> which I read over and returned to them, explaining in a few words the object of the present expedition. ... The mosquitoes have arrived and taken lodgings at a cheap rate.

<sup>1</sup>Mockler-Ferryman, *British Nigeria*, pp. 180–81 and Lloyd, *Search for the Niger*, p. 205. Masaba: Emir of Nupé, assumed the throne from his brother in an armed uprising in 1845; driven into exile in 1854, restored to power the same year; Baikie's unofficial consulate was located at Lokoja within Masaba's kingdom; Masaba's goodwill and his pro-British stance ensured the success of the mission at Lokoja; informed of Baikie's death in a personal letter from Queen Victoria in which she extols Masaba to 'use your great influence to put a stop to this [slave] traffic, and to prevent the wars that are undertaken in many cases for the sole purpose of procuring slaves to be sold for shipment overseas.'; d. 1873, successors hostile to the British.

<sup>2</sup>These treaties are in print in the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Library and are open to inspection.

## 4. 31 August

... Lighted fires weighed and lashed alongside the *Manchester*, and, reshipping all the stores for the expedition, cast off at 8 a.m. and anchored in 5fms at 8.15 a.m. Bishop Crowther and suite returned from the mission house and the Akassa chiefs came also, bringing a present of a sheep which I acknowledged by some flannel, tobacco and rum. ... The palm oil is manufactured by the natives of the creeks, but the whole of it is taken down to the Brass River by a small branch creek and the King of Brass<sup>1</sup> has the entire monopoly of the trade of this place. So much so, indeed, that the head man and chiefs of the neighbourhood are entirely under his authority, which would appear to account for no oils as yet come on board the *Manchester*. ... I cannot omit here to testimony to the courtesy of Captain Derecourt, who with his crew rendered us the greatest assistance in receiving our stores, etc., which I shall not fail to represent in the proper quarter. At 11.30 a.m., the ship having canted to the flood, we weighed and proceeded up the Kwāra [Niger] towards Louis Creek exchanging cheers and salutes from the *Manchester*. I hoisted a white ensign at the Fore, in order to show the natives whose villages we were likely to pass the friendly object of our visit. We were deeply immersed, drawing 5ft 4ins aft and 4ft 10ins forward and the least thing gives the ship a list. We had onboard nearly 40 tons of coal, viz, 15 in cargo boat, 9 in the bunkers and 16 in bulk on the upper deck. Every other float has been taken off to relieve the wheels of their load of water and I judged by the land that we were making 5½ knots over the ground. Entered Louis' Creek at 12.10 p.m. and rounded Snag Island at 1.30 p.m. I have added a creek not laid down and also a small green island, which together with the debris of floating islands has accumulated on either bank; although it does not appear to alter the surroundings. From Trotter Point the shore was fringed with gigantic mangrove trees, some of them attaining a height of 100 feet; above Louis' Creek there was an admixture of palm and other thick bush forming a dense and impenetrable mass. Not a living creature was to be seen. The soundings perfectly regular as laid down in Glover's chart. ... At 2.30 p.m. making 5 knots through the water and about 4 knots over the ground. Revolutions of engines 26. Sighted Sunday Island. Several small snag and pieces of jungle came down. These must be avoided on account of the wheels. ... The ground is more open just here and the limit of the mangrove has been passed giving place to large forest trees, among the

<sup>1</sup>Dike, *Trade and Politics in the Niger Delta*, p. 52, 'Brass: City State in the Niger Delta'; 'Hidden in the deep recesses of the Niger valley and approached by creeks with no [direct] outlet to the Atlantic, Brass became the centre of a gigantic smuggling trade. The organisation of this underground traffic was a closely guarded secret never fully probed by the British navy or merchants.'

branches of which we observed ovine ferns. Some trees were seen like the English Birch and some few magnificent cotton and other trees. Passed Sunday Island at 3 p.m. ... About 3.30 p.m. passed several villages or rather detached clusters of huts on the left bank and some canoes endeavoured without success to overtake us. Both the villages and the taller trees as well as the deepest waters appear to be in the concave parts of the reaches of the river. Here I noticed a woman whose body was covered with a red pigment or clay. Speed 5 knots. Current very slack. ... Steamed within 10 yards of the shore and had 6 fms water. ... Current about 1 knot. Passed a magnificent tree, name unknown, also saw two small birds and the leaf of a large species of waterlily. Rain falling and atmosphere heavy. Temperature only 74°. ... At 4.30 p.m. passed two more huts on the right bank. The natives gazed at us with great curiosity some of them retreating to their huts and crouching down, with their bright eyes just peering through the dark. The smoke of their fires goes out through a hole in the roof. These huts are mostly comprised of bamboos crossed as a framework, and the spaces filled with mud plaster; the whole thatched over with cocoa nut leaf. ... Most of them [huts] wretched in the extreme. Some merely of bamboos placed closely together and lashed. The inhabitants were partially clothed, the younger members quite naked. The women wore armlets and all wore fetish round the neck. 4.45 p.m. Current setting down about  $\frac{1}{2}$  knot. ... The current is irregular at times very slack, but it generally runs stronger in the bends of the reaches in which are the deepest water. The projecting points ought to be avoided as the shoal water generally runs out from them. 5.40 p.m. Passed a clearance of yams. The river has widened during the last 2 hours and the reaches as they open present a fine coup d'oeil. At 5.30 p.m. passed an overhanging cocoanut tree on a point on the right bank. ... Passed the town of Liambre at 6.15 p.m. It contains 500 inhabitants. They hoisted flags and seemed in a great state of excitement. The houses are of much superior construction to those we have yet seen being composed of substantial mud wall and well thatched roof. There is 4fms water close opposite the town but we did not stop as the natives would most certainly have come off and made a great noise. Besides one can never be certain of the disposition of those in the lower part of the river. It was also growing late and we preferred being left to ourselves. We saw here a large number of Brass canoes thatched over. They seem to collect here until they have sufficient force to ascend the river with safety. At 6.30 p.m. passed Brass Creek, a Liambre canoe followed us at its utmost speed for nearly a mile but I was determined and steamed on until they were tired and gave up; and having shut out the town lights I anchored at 7.5 p.m. in  $5\frac{1}{4}$  fms nearly opposite a small village and veered to 24 fms, having made 24 miles good from Trotter Point.

## 5. 1 September

Weighed at 5.30 a.m. and proceeded up the river. 6.10 a.m. Passed Akedo which contains 200 inhabitants. A large covered canoe passed down with a chequered flag. No signs of hostility at this place the people gazing quietly at us. There was only  $5\frac{1}{2}$  fms off Akedo where the chart marks 7 and in the next reach  $5\frac{1}{4}$  fms instead of 10. Current runs down about 1 knot. The early morning here is delicious. Thermometer  $74^{\circ}$ . Another large canoe on sighting us darted into the shore, and the occupants huddled themselves up until we passed. A fish eagle was perched on the extreme branch of a tall gnarled and withered tree, gazing down complacently on us. 6.45 a.m. Opened on a very pretty and extensive reach. ... At 7 a.m. when opposite the creek above Akedo the soundings were  $5\frac{1}{4}$  instead of 10 fms, and there is one more bend just before this not marked down. At 8 a.m. passed a village with fishing stakes but these we could not see. This reach is apparently much longer than one would imagine from the chart and the soundings were regular at  $5\frac{1}{2}$  fms, when they are laid down at 8, 9 and 11 fms. ... We carried  $5\frac{1}{2}$  fms up the next reach below the town of Opuhpuroma. Here the scenery is tamer and the forest trees are not so fine. A little bird of a deep plum colour sat on a snag, about the size of a sparrow. We named them Snagbirds as they were generally seen sitting on the decayed stumps of trees. Passed Opuhpuroma at 9.30 a.m. It contains 500 inhabitants and seems better built than the villages we have passed as yet. Angama which we passed at 10.15 a.m. is not such a neat town, it also contains 500 inhabitants. ... The natives merely stared at us and we saw no firearms or hostile demonstration. ... At 11.25 a.m. passed the creek below Asasi, did not shoal water here to less than  $3\frac{1}{4}$  fms. ... Another shower of rain fell here, but the weather is very hot between the showers. A little further on, on the right bank, opened another creek about 50 yards wide not laid down on the chart with  $4\frac{1}{2}$  fms off it. Passed an open, cleared spot on this side where the river had overflowed its banks and submerged a native hut: two tall white barked trees in the clearing, not unlike the English birch. At 11.55 a.m. a creek on the left bank. ... Also a small clearance with the creu plant growing, which is a vegetable similar to but more delicate than the yam and a principal article of food. At 12.15 p.m. passed Asasi which has 300 inhabitants; it is placed nearly a mile too low down in the chart. The river here seems rather high, the bank being only two feet;  $3\frac{1}{4}$  fms where 6 marked. ... Saw a fish trap here, but I do not clearly see how the natives catch fish in them in as much as it is open at the lee end; there were some other small ones inshore of Asasi, more like our crab pot. At 12.35 p.m. passed the next creek on the left bank,  $3\frac{1}{4}$  fms off it, then 4 & 5 fms.

Current variable but about  $\frac{3}{4}$  knot. A small floating island aground on the opposite point. Passed Tuesday Island at 1.50 p.m. Soundings  $5\frac{1}{2}$  fms all along here where 2 are laid down. Passed Ekebre at 2.25 p.m., it contains 200 inhabitants: An immense cotton tree just below it; also a tree with peculiar shaped leaves. This is a picturesque and well built mud village with more signs of activity and palm oil trade than we have yet seen. ... Thermometer  $82^{\circ}$  below,  $80^{\circ}$  on deck under house,  $88^{\circ}$  on bridge, but this later is partly owing to the radiation of heat from the funnel, which has been intense all day. Temperature in the stoke hold  $125^{\circ}$ , but until we furled the funnel awning it was up to  $135^{\circ}$ . The tree marked here on the chart has disappeared. Passed a large canoe laden with plantains and other produce besides several passengers. The canoe men have their feet supported by a sort of rope stirrup attached to the side. At 3 p.m. passed a small creek on right bank not marked. In passing the winding reach beyond Ekebre the soundings were very regular as per the chart, the deepest water flows on the left bank. Current very strong,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  knots with eddies and several decayed and sunken palm stumps at intervals. Passed Ekole at 5.45 p.m. and Kpetema villages about 6.45 p.m. but it was too dark to distinguish the houses clearly, of the latter village, and the weather became thick with drizzling rain. Steamed past them and anchored just below Taylor's Creek at 7 p.m. in 5 fms, veering to 36. Triced up boarding nets and placed extra lookouts. Current running  $2\frac{1}{2}$  knots at least. Made 38 miles good today.

## 6. 2 September

Were under weigh by 5.30 a.m. and proceeded up the river. ... River slower flowing here. Fishing stakes on bank. Wind NW with drizzling rain. Thermometer  $76^{\circ}$ . At 6.45 a.m. observed 2 villages on right bank just as we opened the reach which is not laid down on the chart. At 7.45 a.m. passed Sabogrega, the first village that fired on the *Rainbow*<sup>1</sup> and killed two men on her passage down in 1859 with Glover and Baikie. It appears a large and well built one and is divided into two parts separated about 100 yards. Some palm oil casks were seen on shore. Current two knots, but keeping close inshore one can make better way. Soundings  $9\frac{3}{4}$  fms opposite the north end of Sabogrega Island. There is another cocoa nut tree on the right bank, right ahead – a good mark to steer for while

<sup>1</sup>Hollett, *The Conquest of the Niger*, pp. 204–5 and 213. *Rainbow*, Built by Laird, Birkenhead, launched 26 May 1858, 161-ton paddle steamer; designed and built for MacGregor Laird for exploration of the Niger, two other larger vessels *Dayspring* and *Sunbeam* built in 1857; in 1859 two crew were shot dead whilst the vessel transited the Delta region, this incident closed the river to commercial traffic for two years.

passing the village. ... At 9.35 a.m. passed island below Atōtēř; it now came on to drizzle again, but altogether we are fortunate in having so little rain. Stopped off Oloberi at 10.45 a.m. The King came alongside and we had a short conversation and Bishop Crowther and myself gave him some trifling presents. He seemed disappointed when I told him we were not a trading vessel, saying that one had been often promised but had never come. They appeared afraid to come on board and we were anxious to profess that all hostility of these villages was at an end. Proceeded up river at 11 a.m. passing close by Kiamah and Opotolo, we saw some palm oil casks there also and some Brass canoes. The women mostly seemed in an interesting condition, but are very ugly with scowling expression of countenance. They plait their curls in straight and separate plaits like little pigtails and the armlets and leg rings of elephant's tusks are very massive. Some of the men probably warriors, appeared covered with red ochre varied by white and yellow streaks and patches over their eyes and down the skull and arms. Most of the people were eating sugar cane and all seemed anxious to trade, pointing to the oil casks and making gestures imitative of drinking rum. Thermometer on quarterdeck 80°, in cabin 84°, Bridge 86°, Engine room 110°. Observed a long covered Brass canoe hauled in among the reedy grass with a 4 pdr gun in the bows. All these covered or thatched canoes come from Brass for the palm oil, which they take down the creek, and the corrupting influence of these coast natives, is felt as high up the river as Aloha. Wind at noon SW. The winds here are local and influenced by the reaches and bends. ... Entered Stirling Island passage at 12.55 p.m. 4¼ fms, and carried 3¼ fms and then 4, 5, 3½, and 3 fathoms right through. It is a short cut and saves a mile or two. The *Investigator* passed through on both previous occasions. The passage is about 100 yards in width, there are some fine forest trees on the island, which is incorrectly laid down, as the southern opening only just shuts in at the northern end, on a SbW ½ W bearing. Passed the extreme at 1.15 p.m. the small island if any existed has attached itself to the western bank, and the channel is of a totally different shape. ... At 2.10 p.m. passed the point below Imblaman; it appears to be an island as there are some tall forest trees and brushwood upon it. We had 3¼ fms close to the shore. At 2.30 p.m. passed the village of Imblaman. Weather cloudy but cool, wind WNW inclined to drizzle. Crowds of natives gathering on the shore to gaze at us. The bush here seems to be cleared and cultivated, much farther to the rear of the riverbank. The upper village seems to be the best built one. At 3.20 p.m. passed a shoal marked as covered; there were several large trees aground on it and the point close to us on the right bank was nearly over flowing, indeed from our bridge the shore appeared below the watermark. At 3.30 p.m. we had only 2¾ fms on this side. ... The current

runs down on this shore about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  knots. At 3.55 p.m. arrived at an island extending along the right bank for nearly a mile and passed its southern extreme at 4.10 p.m. As it is not laid down I concluded that it is either adrift from the upper country or a submerged part of the mainland, although there seemed to be a channel of clear water between it and the shore. There were some yams and plantains upon it, but it was much overflowed. ... Current nearly 3 knots. After passing this island we got 7 fms instead of  $4\frac{3}{4}$ . Passed Agberi at 4.45 p.m., one of the villages is very large. Passed the southern extreme of Truro Island. at 5.22 p.m. but got only 5 fms through the passage, when 8 are marked. Rain fell fast. 5.38 p.m. Passed the north end of the island,  $6\frac{3}{4}$  fms. Shoaled to 10 feet by keeping too far to the northward after clearing the passage, but by bringing the centre of Truro Island to bear WSW you carry the deepest water across to the left bank. ... Current 2 knots. Revolutions of engines 28, going up well against the stream. 6.5 p.m. passed a rather large village on the right bank, not laid down. Three or four Brass canoes were moored inshore under the houses. Steamed up to Grass Island ... and anchored abreast of the upper island at 7.5 p.m. in 4 fms, veering to 36. Made 35 miles today. Kept boarding nettings up.

### 7. 3 September

Weighed at 5.30 a.m. and proceeded up the river. At 5.45 passed Osogdonique; after passing the village two guns were fired probably as a salute. At 6.25 passed Ofinemangah. Bush receding and trees more dispersed and land appears a little higher. Saw an idol about 4 feet high in front of a hut. A canoe paddled by, and a native held up a moderately sized fish, but we could not stop for it. ... Light south-easterly wind and cloudy. Heavy towering clouds in the north-east quarter. ... At 8.20 a.m. passed the village marked on the right bank. It was partly hidden by the bush, but the inhabitants all crowded down to gaze on us. Several women ran away like frightened hares as we steamed by, and when a long glass was directed at the people, the Chief, who stood apart, surrounded by his headmen, took his hat off and they all squatted down, apparently expecting to be shot at, but they were re-assured when I waived my white handkerchief at them. We still carry our white ensign at the Fore, but I don't think they understand it. At 8.20 a.m. passed another village on the right bank. The creek marked here has been filled up and the opposite shoals have become islets, over which we could see another village. At 8.30 a.m. passed two or three cotton trees in which were a flock of at least a hundred beautifully white herons. They were building and sitting on their nests. It was a very pretty sight. The nests all seemed to be in one

tree and it was most interesting to watch the graceful attitudes of these fine birds. At 9.50 passed the eastern end of a large grass island when we observed some Brass canoes, hauled up amongst the reedy grass. Current  $2\frac{1}{2}$  knots. At 10.50 passed a wattled enclosure with a few huts in the rear. This is the first enclosed village I have remarked, it is formed of bamboos lashed together. I think it very probable that the stumps and half sunken trees are never the same as those of previous years, nearly all of those marked in the chart having disappeared and others apparently washed from the banks and grounded in other places. The water round the next point beyond this village is much deeper than the chart  $\frac{9}{10}$  fathoms<sup>1</sup> being obtained at one cast, where 5 and 6 were expected. ... At a small cluster of huts here saw one woman with massive anklets of ivory, each nearly a foot long. At noon the centre of Avgau Island bore east,  $9\frac{1}{4}$  fms where 4 are marked down. Current between 3 and 4 knots close to the right bank. A canoe laden with maize, plantains and firewood was paddling up swiftly inshore out of the tide and nearly keeping pace with the ship. Thermometer in the stoke hole  $112^{\circ}$ , Bridge  $97^{\circ}$ , Sun  $120^{\circ}$ , cabin  $84^{\circ}$  and 2 deck  $83\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ . ... 12.35 p.m. anchored off Ibo [Ébo] creek in 3 fms close to a grass island which is now partially overflown, at the upper end of which Laird's factory existed some years ago. It was washed away and plundered, since which no Europeans have lived here. Soon after our arrival a principal chief called Ishūkuma came off, from the King, to whom I explained the object of our visit. I requested him to salute the King whose name is Orissā and to say that I was anxious to proceed up the river now but would call on him on my return. I gave Ishūkuma a scarf and some rum and he departed. We weighed at 1.45 p.m. and endeavoured once or twice to make the channel but nearly grounded on the north-west shoal off Laird's Factory Island, and as it was coming on to rain very heavily, with thick weather, I anchored in 2 fms and sent a boat to sound around the ship. The shoal has evidently extended to the south-east, and the deep water is near Avgau Island. At 4 p.m. weighed and proceeded. Found 9, 8 and 7 fms in the channel. In passing between the northern extremes of the two islands opposite Nidonī, found only ten feet where 3 or 4 fms are marked, also a little further up on the right bank, we shoaled to 8 feet where  $4\frac{3}{4}$  fms was marked but keeping out a little, deepened the water again. At 7.5 p.m. we anchored in  $4\frac{1}{4}$  fms nearly opposite the village on the right bank in  $5^{\circ} 38'$  Lat. and veered to 24 fathoms. Current  $2\frac{1}{2}$  knots. Made 25 miles today.

<sup>1</sup> ' $\frac{9}{10}$  fathoms' indicates that the lead of the leadline did not strike the bottom when the leadline was vertical and showing 10 fathoms of line out.

8. *4 September*

Weighed at 5.10 a.m. and proceeded up the river. 6 a.m. Passed Feen Island and had 5 & 7 fms along it. The island is lower down than it is marked on the chart. Current  $1\frac{1}{2}$  knots. Clouds heavy and lowering. Drizzling rain set in. The water perfectly smooth and glassy. 7.25 Passed south end of next grassy island. On sounding its northern point shoaled water to  $2\frac{1}{4}$  fms. Kept over to the right bank and deepened to 7 and 8 fms, bank overflowed in some places; some white herons among the reeds. Stood over  $E\frac{1}{2}N$  to the left bank. We are now making 4 miles good over the ground. 8.38 Passed Osomari creek in  $9\frac{1}{2}$  fms water. Current setting down 3 knots. Engines working well making 32 revolutions. ... 11.20 passed the villages of Alenso; they are not on the river side but several paths lead down to the bank, on which the natives crowded apparently welcoming us as we passed. The palm trees about here are more stunted and less frequent. Forest trees predominate, but well detached, and there was not such a tangled mass of bush and brushwood as one sees lower down the river. The ground is cultivated with yams and the shoals about here are grown over with grass and low bushes and seem much more extensive than laid down. Wind light from the southward and weather very thick with rain. Thermometers at noon, Bridge  $82^{\circ}$ , Cabin  $82^{\circ}$ , Engine room  $128^{\circ}$ . ... At 1.30 p.m. thermometer in engine room  $146^{\circ}$ , one thermometer has warped and cracked from the heat. As we approached Onitsha, the ground on that side appeared more elevated and undulating on the right bank it was thick wood. 2.00 p.m. Opened the small bay where Lairds Factory formerly stood and at 2.15 p.m. rounded the point, but owing to the counter current the ship would not answer her helm and we ran up against the bank and crushed some fishing stakes. We ran out a kedge and warped clear of there but grounded on a bank in the centre of the bay. However by 3.30 p.m. we managed to anchor in 6 fms and veered to 18, about a ship's length from the cocoa nut tree in the middle of the bay. On entering this anchorage another time I would steam past the cotton tree as we did, but would come in from the southward and steering for the centre of the bay and putting the helm hard a port, would let go the starboard anchor, whilst forging ahead. The people connected with the mission crowded down under the cotton tree to watch our arrival and the Reverend Mr Taylor came on board to salute the Bishop and to inform him that all was well. I requested him to make arrangements for procuring bullocks and firewood. The former he said were not easy to be obtained. ... The natives greeted us with many salutations and appeared glad to see us. Mosquitoes and sandflies came off in great numbers, and while we were foul of the bushes two snakes crawled on board up the paddle wheel.

They were of a dark green colour and I believe venomous. Distance run today 31 miles.

### 9. 5 September

At 5 a.m. I went for a walk onshore, towards Onitsha, and collected some specimens of grass and snail shells. The natives shake hands on meeting and salute you with 'Good morning'. ... The stream was still flowing on our return about an hour afterwards. ... The mission compound is about a mile from the river bank and about 100 yards further in came upon the suburbs of the town. We entered one hut; it was a quadrangle with a covered way on each side and an open court in the middle of about 12 feet square. We passed through a splendid avenue of tall cotton and creeper. The natives crowded around us and seemed desirous of searching our pockets, which attention we politely declined. One girl was tattooed in a curious manner. Among other devices was a raised work like a watch chain round the chest, done in blue. One or two small boys had intelligent faces. The natives we met were mostly armed with muskets or darts, and cleavers or choppers for cutting wood. The morning was beautifully cool and pleasant. Thermometer only 75° until the sun got up. Some of the party took their guns, but lost their way among the tall grass and only saw a few doves and small birds. There is a spring of good water both near the bank and at the Mission house. River water is very turbid and has been known to give dysentery. I understand from Mr Taylor, the resident missionary, that the river begins to fall in the middle of October and that the lowest water here is in March. Human sacrifices are not abolished. One person is offered in a year as a sort of scapegoat for the sins of the people; and if a wealthy proprietor or headman dies, a victim is offered at his obsequies. The mode of execution is to bind him hand and foot and drag him on his face to the river, into which he is thrown, and if he can extricate himself or survive it all, which is a very rare occurrence, he swims to the other shore, but is prohibited from ever returning. We heard today that a canoe with two men was proceeding up the river yesterday and had arrived within 2 miles of this place; where they were fired upon, and one man killed who was taken on shore, cut up, and eaten on the spot. ... Domestic slavery is also one of the institutions of this country. I waited until 11 a.m. for the bullocks and as they did not appear, we weighed and making a stern board, to clear this most inconvenient anchorage, proceeded up the river. At noon, weather cloudy but very oppressive. Water perfectly smooth. Current from 1 to 2½ knots. Revolutions of engine 31. Burning coal and wood. Thermometers on Bridge 90°, Cabin 84°, 2nd Deck 82°, Engine room 130°. At 12.20 p.m. Asabā on right bank.

... We saw several bullocks but could not stop, as it takes such a time to bargain with the natives. ... It seems strange that one cannot get any stock for hours when at the mission stations and yet at the intermediate villages plenty of bullocks are seen. 2.30 p.m. Passed Walker Island. Thermometer in the shade  $86^{\circ}$ , in sun  $112^{\circ}$ . Water like a mirror, not a ripple on it. By a mixture of wood and coal we are saving 2 cwt an hour. This if kept up will be 16 miles gained in every 12 hours. We were done out of 11 bags of coal, when coaling from the *Rattlesnake*, besides several not properly filled. This is a very important matter in a river journey of some hundred miles. About 3.15 p.m. while passing Lake Island, observed the horizon off Miller Point N, by compass, 6 miles. Got shoal water about a mile and a half to windward of Lake Island. We were near the right bank but shoaling to  $2\frac{1}{2}$  fms, kept over towards the other side, and got into 11, 10 and 8 feet. We immediately eased the engines and after keeping on the shoal for some time, deepened the water again towards the right bank. ... At 6.45 while passing Onijah, shoaled water to 11 ft edged over to the middle of the river and anchored at 6.53 p.m. in  $3\frac{1}{4}$  fms, veered to 24. Current  $1\frac{1}{2}$  to 2 knots. Weather fine. Distance made good 26 miles.

#### 10. 6 September

5.35 a.m. weighed and proceeded up river. The river here is broad but uninteresting. ... At 6.45 a.m. passed the river Edoh, it is apparently 50 to 60 yards wide and appears to have plenty of water. There are 7 fms close off it. At 7.20 observed village on left bank which on first appearance seemed like a temporary encampment, but afterwards saw that it was permanent although of a peculiar construction. Huts very low, oblong and built close together. River here 1000 yards across. Deepest water here of 7 fms on right bank. At 7.45 while passing the lower extreme of the island below Ojipo Magare shoaled water suddenly. Found that the lower island was partially submerged. Crossed over to the eastern shore, deepening our water as we proceeded and got at one cast  $\frac{9}{10}$  fms close to the point on the left bank. At 8.30 a.m. whilst passing Ojipo Magare Island, struck on a shoal extending some distance from it. Stopped and reversed engines and sent gig to sound. At 8.40 floated off, having received no injury beyond starting foundation plates of engines one inch. Up boat and proceeded. Shoaled again to 8 feet on right bank whilst shaping course up the river. Soon got into deep water. This shoal must be very extensive and the passage I think narrow. The island of Ojipo has been washed away for 2 years and it was a submerged portion of this upon which we struck. The water also shoals extensively off the island opposite, between Ojipo and Obijaga, on which we got 9 feet soon after. We do not see any of these

villages, as they are built some distance inland and thereby lose some very necessary landmarks. ... Hardly a bird or living creature to be seen. At 11.40 a.m. entered Arka island passage. Observed a lofty range of mountains about north-north-east. Found 7 and 9 fathoms through the latter part of the passage, by keeping to the left bank, but shoaled to 2 fms at the upper end, deepening again to  $4\frac{1}{2}$  fms on entering the next passage. Passed two double banked canoes proceeding down river with about 30 men in each and a 3pdr gun in the bows. As there were no women they were probably on a war expedition. ... Carried  $7\frac{1}{2}$  fms through the next creek on the left bank. At 12.53 p.m. entered Lander Island passage,  $6\frac{3}{4}$  fms. River very high. The island in some places inundated. Had  $6\frac{3}{4}$  fms,  $7\frac{1}{4}$ , 5 &  $4\frac{1}{2}$  fms through the passage. The deep water on the left bank. Current  $2\frac{1}{2}$  knots and several tide ripples. Water more shoal at the northern end; but varying from  $4\frac{1}{2}$  to 3 fms. Observed a range of hills from 500 to 600 feet high to the NW and the lofty range of King William, Mounts Oro and Okiri in the distance. Brought  $2\frac{1}{2}$ ,  $3\frac{1}{2}$  & 6 fms up to the anchorage off Iddah. Revolutions of engines 31. The greatest heat of the day is between 3 and 3.30 p.m. and the temperature here will show this to be the hottest we have yet had, Bridge  $102^{\circ}$ , Cabin  $87^{\circ}$ , 2nd Deck  $88^{\circ}$ , Engine room  $142^{\circ}$ , sun  $127^{\circ}$ . Anchored at 3.05 p.m. in 8fms opposite landing place of Iddah. Current very strong, nearly 3 knots. Bishop Crowther went on shore to see Abokoh the headman of trade, through whom I sent a message to the Atta<sup>1</sup> to acquaint him that on my return I hoped to wait on him, and sent him a few presents as a token of my intention. ... Bishop Crowther on his return said that his interview had been successful. I therefore hoped to be able to conclude a treaty with the Atta on my return, which will probably facilitate the progress, both of trade, religion and civilisation. Igara is a large province and the Atta is said to have power. 5.40 p.m. weighed and proceeded up river. ... Anchored off the N. end of Abokõs Island at 6.50 p.m. in  $5\frac{1}{2}$  fms. Veered to 30. Current  $2\frac{1}{2}$  knots. Distance made good today  $38\frac{1}{2}$  miles.

### 11. 7 September

5.20 a.m. Weighed and proceeded up the river. 6.20 passed N. end of Selim Island. Ututuru Islands appear to be incorrectly laid down, the southern island being the smallest and the centre one the largest. Which

<sup>1</sup>Mockler-Ferryman, *British Nigeria*, pp. 33 and 283 Attah of Iddah: The King of Iddah a province in the lower Niger; during the expedition of 1841 he ceded 'a plot of land at Lokoja six miles long by four miles wide to "his sister, the Queen of England", but, after the return of the expedition to England, the British Government declined to ratify this part of the treaty. The price agreed to be paid was £45.'

latter has a channel between it. The morning is not so cool or refreshing as usual. Weather overcast and cloudy. Grass is growing in the shoal beyond. Passed four large canoes with guns and 18 or 20 paddlers in each going up the river. Got 11 feet after passing the shoals laid down. There appears to be an extensive flat here. At 7 passed a large village on the left bank opposite Shuter Island. It is built of a mixture of beehive and oblong huts. Several flags were displayed as we passed but there were no outward gestures of surprise. ... The sun now came out strong, leading us to expect a repetition of yesterday's heat. ... At 7.30 crossed over to Shuter Island on which there is another extensive village, the most picturesque of its kind we have yet met with. The bank is about 8 ft in height and there are one or two fine trees in the foreground, which with the varied foliage in the rear and the lofty hills in the background form a most picturesque tableau. 8.15 Passed the northern extreme of Shuter Island and edged over to Smart Island. The scenery now totally changed and become quite magnificent. At 8.45 Passed N. end of Smart Island and edged over NbE. 9.45 Passed Bird Rock in  $6\frac{3}{4}$  fms. It is about 10 feet high and of whitish granite formation. We now entered upon a perfect amphitheatre of lofty hills and mountain ranges, passing Okiri Island at 10 a.m. The bank grassy and about 8 or 10 ft high. Some lofty trees and a few palms, the huts of the village just visible above the tall grass. The grass land and detached trees give the slopes on each bank of the river the appearance of an English park. Got 2 fms water near and on the centre of Okiri Island. 10.20 Passed north end of this island and steered for Maconochie Island channel; on the left bank of the river the hills sloped down to the water's edge, but on the right bank they are further inland, and the thick bush and grassy bank predominates. Entered this channel at 10.35 a.m. ... Revolutions of engines 34, working well. Cargo boat cleared of coals and ship much lighter. 11.20 Re-entered the main river and steered for the bluff point on Beaufort Island, keeping it well open of the right hand low point. 11.40 Passed a rock under water near left bank, one which a strong tide ripple was running. Mount St Michael bearing north-east. 11.45 Passed the next creek with villages on either bank. 12.5 Passed southern high point of Beaufort Island. Huge boulders of rock jut out from the thick and tangled bush, and craggy masses and chasms are plainly distinguishable up the thickly wooded sides of the higher mountain. Mounts Okiri and Oro are magnificent, rising to the height of 1400 feet. But one of the most remarkable features in the ranges is a hill on the left bank called by Lander, Mount St Michael. On this bearing it rises to a sharp point and the top is composed of sharp jutting crags. On one of which there are 2 flat stones, first balanced as it were on the points of rock. Got 7 fms water close in shore here. Opened on a patch of guinea corn and a few detached

conical huts on Beaufort Island. 12.40 p.m. Passed Little Beaufort Island, crossed over to the left bank then back to the right bank, keeping in the deepest water. ... 1.30 Observed a rock almost awash opposite another large boulder in shore. We are steaming up close to the bank in 7 fms of water. There is a large village on the slope of the left bank and several clusters of huts further in the background, intermingled with curious masses of granite balanced like Druidical remains. The indentation and points on the right bank of the river on approaching the confluence are not clearly defined in the chart and are much deeper than was laid down. 2 p.m. Steered for the point below Laird's Factory Point. There is a rock just above water with a bush on it. Farther beyond is a range of hills at the foot of which stands Dr. Baikie's settlement of Lokoja. At 2.10 p.m. edged over to the left bank and anchored off Igbegebe at 2.20 p.m. in 5¼ fms. Veered to 30 fms. Distance made good 35½ miles. Crowds of people awaited our arrival with much excitement. Average current during the day 2 knots and at time 3 knots, but we have always remarked that it varies according to the bends in the river. Temperature just before anchoring, Bridge 97°, Cabin 87°, Deck 90°, Engine room 140°. Observed a mark on a boulder in shore '*Pleiad*<sup>1</sup> October 1854', also a tide mark in feet painted on the face of the rock. After anchoring we sent the cargo boat inshore for wood and landed Bishop Crowther's stores and parcels this being his principal halting place. An interpreter came off to see us named Dagana – Yaladīma, whom we made drink the Queen's health in a glass of port wine, although he was a mahomedan and saluted us in the usual manner with Salaam Aléikūm. The people on shore appeared to hold Bishop Crowther in great respect. I landed with him in the evening and visited the mission compound and called on one of the headmen. ... My reason for remaining here tonight was to take in wood, as although the residence of Dr. Baikie is only five miles from here we have a long distance yet to accomplish and our coal is getting scanty. There are no bullocks to be got here or at Lokoja. But sheep, yams and a few fowls can be procured. The people are idolaters ...

<sup>1</sup>W. B. Baikie, *Narrative of an Exploring Voyage up the Rivers Kwóra and Bónue commonly known as the Niger and Tsádda in 1854* (London, 1856). *Pleiad*: p. 5, built by John Laird, Birkenhead; length 100ft, beam 24ft, draught 7ft, 260 tons measurement, 60hp. Burns, *History of Nigeria*, pp. 99–100, built as a public-private enterprise for further exploration of the Bínue river. The number of Europeans on the expedition limited to a few naval officers to navigate the vessel and survey the river along with commercial representatives of MacGregor Laird for commercial operations. *Pleiad* was on the Niger and Bínue rivers for four months in 1854; significantly there were no deaths among the 12 Europeans and 54 Africans in the crew possibly due to the prophylactic use of quinine. *Pleiad*'s voyage proved that Europeans could survive on the river to trade, and effectively concluded 'the pioneering exploration of Nigeria'.

## 12. 8 September

Weighed at 5.40 a.m. and steamed up the confluence of the rivers Kwara and Binue. A magnificent view here presents itself. The meeting of the waters forms an extensive lake, which is surrounded on all sides by hilly ranges. These are covered with wood and park land and slope down to the river bank which is clothed with thick bush and underwood which seems apparently from the height of the rivers to grow out of the water. The bottom is rocky and uneven with strong tide ripples. In the centre of this water is a grassy island called Duck Island, abounding with waterfowl in the dry season. It is somewhat in the form of an obtuse angled triangle and is now partly overflowed. The morning was cool and refreshing and the air dry and healthy. Anchored off Lokoja at 6.35 a.m. in 7 fms. Veered to 36 fms. The settlement is prettily situated at the foot of Mount Lokoja (misnamed Patter) close to the left is Mount Stirling a wood crowned hill about 50 feet in height. We anchored about 50 yards from the shore. At the landing place there was a large tree on which we placed a tide mark. A ship's length astern of us is a grassy island nearly submerged. Shortly after our arrival Dr. Baikie came on board. He was clothed in country fashion in a long blue sheet tobe or mantle, red pyjama trousers, a scull cap, and sandals. He appears much tanned by the sun, wears a long beard and has adopted many of the customs of the natives by whom he is looked up to as a great chief. He appeared in excellent health and delighted to see his countrymen again. The report of Lieutenant Bedford's death<sup>1</sup> is unfortunately too true. He died on the 22nd February last, of cerebral disease, and is buried not far from the compound under Mount Stirling. We landed all Dr. Baikie's numerous packages and those of his temporary successor Lieutenant Bouchier RMLI, who remains up during his absence. The mails above consisted of two huge bags, which will probably take the Doctor the whole of the homeward journey to read. As an instance of the tardy means of communication up this river I may mention that a letter was sent from Onitsha ... in January last, which only reached Dr. Baikie in August, so that were there not yearly expeditions made, all home communication would be cut off as owing to the unsettled state of the country the land transit is difficult and unsafe. Thermometer in shade 90°, Cabin 87°, Sun 115°, at 3 p.m. Current 2 knots. Some lightning during the night.

<sup>1</sup>One of *Investigator's* officers left to assist Baikie the previous year.

### 13. 9 September

Rain this morning. Employed splitting and storing wood which we procured from the stores and storing three tons of coal, for our return voyage, in the cargo boat which we intend to moor to the mark tree during our further absence up the river. We shipped our paddle floats and were employed packing pistons and glands. Some ivory, country cloths and small curiosities were brought off today, and some neighbouring chiefs also sent in presents of yams and sheep from time to time as they heard of our arrival. Thermometer at 3 p.m.  $85^{\circ}$  on deck and below. Dr. Baikie appears to have done a good deal for Lokoja. Which from its central and commanding position just above the confluence and its healthy situation will if the Niger be taken up in earnest probably become of great importance to England. The only drawback to the situation is that it is too much shut out by the hills in the rear from W and SW winds, Mount Lokoja being nearly 1100 feet high, this makes the anchorage at Igbege, cooler than Lokoja, but persons frequently come up from Igbege for their health. The heat is dry and healthy and there is an absence of that damp [word] feeling which makes the seaboard of Africa so enervating. There is heavy dew at night but it is very hot in the day time although this is the cool season. Persons should not be exposed to the sun between 7.30 or 8 a.m. and 3 and 3.30 p.m. nor to the night dew. Although I should think that except in the dry season there is little or no malaria. ... The place could be easily fortified and if a redoubt were built on Mount Stirling, it would entirely command the Kwara. The water is good and the soil such that every African product can be cultivated here. Yams, guinea corn, cassava, coco, rice, pineapples, plantains, etc are cultivated. There are also wild grapes and one or two other species of wild fruit growing on the hills. ... The houses here are conical but strongly built and in detached compounds. A good precaution against fire. Dr. Baikie's huts are spacious and well ventilated as I mentioned before he has adopted many of the native customs, and is proficient in the Hausa language. Masaba the mahomedan King of Nupé, whose influence and rule extends here, is his great protector and friend. Indeed Dr. Baikie may be considered as one of his chiefs. There was formerly a village here called Egara, but on Dr. Baikie's arrival it was deserted, as the inhabitants were afraid of Masaba's people, and Lokoja under Dr. Baikie's auspices has arisen in its stead. The population is about 100, they seem cheerful and contented and pay great deference to him and I think will much miss him when he leaves. He always reads two services on Sunday in Hausa and English and governs his people as far as possible by European maxims. ... Bishop Crowther left the ship this afternoon for Igbege in the small canoe with one paddle,

and taking a few baskets of unpicked cotton grown near here. There are many animals in the neighbourhood. A Leopard is now reported as being near the village and Hyenas pay occasional visits during the night. Elephants, buffalo and deer frequent the country in the rear of the hills, but do not come within sight of the settlement. We have not seen a single crocodile or river horse yet. It is now the breeding season for Hippopotami, and indeed the end of the rain is the breeding season for all the natives. I hear of a peculiar vegetable poison called Goa-gwāmi which is used by the natives on their arrows and darts. It is *said* to kill a man before he can run 50 yards. ... Tornadoes come on here at intervals of every two or three days, if from the east-north-east they generally pass along the Binue mouth towards Igbegbe; if from the north-north-east they go behind the mountain range to the northward. But if lightning and a threatening appearance arise in the north-east quarter, they are pretty certain to come down here. This mountain range alluded to extends from 8 to 10 miles inland.

#### 14. 10 September

Landed in the early morning to shoot doves, they are plentiful about here, but very wild, shot a cardinal but bush too thick to recover him. At 4 p.m. we started in the gig on a shooting expedition up the creek, having pulled some distance passed Mount Stirling we entered upon a network of creeks and lagoons which intersected the banks through the overflowing of the river. ... We were so taken up with the sport that it was within a few minutes of sundown before we awoke to the probability of not being able to see our way back. Accordingly we retraced our steps but got into considerable difficulties and had not the moon been up and clear we should infallibly have had to spend a night on the marshes, without food or covering and with the addition of dew, mosquitoes and possible malaria. The moon just enabled us to dimly mark out the narrow opening in the bush and right glad were we to get back about 2 hours after sunset. Thermometer in the cabin 84° at noon.

#### 15. 11 September

Divisions and divine service. Allowed no trading canoes onboard and passed the first quiet day we have had. Dr. Baikie came onboard in the afternoon, I am much pleased with him. He is a man who seldom talks about himself or his doings and has the interest of his country at heart. He considers the Kwara to be the main stream of the two, the Binue is much shallower during the dry season. In 1854 he explored the latter river

in the *Pleiad* for nearly 300 miles above the confluence but not being able to procure wood owing to the timidity of the natives and from various other circumstances he was compelled to return. The Binue, interpreted means 'Mother of Water'. The Kwara 'Great Water'. The former, supplying the first rush of water to this part of the river, but the Kwara is the great reservoir and principal supplier of the Niger. In a high year the rise and fall is sometimes 40 feet, and current from 2 to 3 knots. The river is at its height from the 1st to the 10th October and falls until May or sometime later. At low water the Binue appears of a deep blue colour. Respecting the name Niger, the natives of Timbūktu call the river Egeiro, from which it is supposed Nigeir, or Niger is derived by the ancient Greeks. ...

### 16. 12 September

At 7.25 a.m. having embarked Dr. Baikie and followers, we weighed and proceeded up the river Kwara, leaving the cargo boat in charge of a Kruman. Weather cloudy light air from the northward. The range of hills here is called Lūmade from a town or village of that name on its slope. From which fish, bananas, palm oil and a few yams can be procured. Whilst at Lokoja some very fine yams came on board. ... At 8.45 a.m. ... wind south-east and inclined to rain. Heavy masses of clouds gathering over the north-eastern hill ranges. At 9 passed a village on the right bank nearly submerged, also one further inshore. River very high here. At 10.5 passed the narrow channel between Ādama and Gbāla villages. You must keep close to the left bank, then sharp off to the WNW. The current runs strong through the passages and requires two men at the helm. We only got from 8½ to 11 feet, between the grassy shoals when steering WNW. ... Oil palms (the only species about here) are now more abundant, and a considerable quantity of oil is produced at the villages of Ādama and in the neighbourhood. These villages are more properly styled Āra after the title of the chief. Passed Dagake, the head Āra's town at 10.50 a.m. Until Masaba destroyed this town in 1860, after 14 days bombardment, it was used to intercept and annoy the canoes trading down the river. The Āra was killed in the fight and since then they have given less trouble. ... At 11.15 a.m. while passing an island and shoal abreast of Adabodu we were struck on the broadside by a heavy tornado from the north-east accompanied by blinding rain. We heeled over considerably and our starboard wheel was quite useless for a time. The sudden cold so took the Master's and my breath away that we could hardly give orders. However we just managed to scrape clear of the shoals and anchored in 2½ fms until 11.45 a.m. The weather then cleared a little and we proceeded, but

it still continued thick with rain for some time. ... About 1 p.m. after passing Adamagu Point touched the ground at the extremity of the shoal, where we ought to have had  $2\frac{1}{2}$  fms, but reversing the engines at once, kept over to the left bank, where we had deeper water up to 7 fms. There are no soundings at all marked on this side of the river. At 2 p.m. in crossing over to the right bank, touched at the southern extremity of Nevilli Island but reversing in time deepened our water and proceeded. At 2.50 passed Bōdo, the weather now cleared up. 3.25 passed Ādāma-Kālebe; the shoal in the middle of the river just beyond extends much farther towards the right bank, as we shoaled to 2 fms, unexpectedly. It had a large tree aground marking the centre of its position. The deep water is close to the right bank. At 3.50 passed the large village of Deriri misnamed Idare on the chart. At 4.45 passed the island and town of Muya, it is very substantially built and the largest town on the banks of the river. At 6 passed Fori, the Angwa on the chart. A creek leading to Bidon is so large that we nearly mistook it for the Inanu River. At 6.30 the points becoming rather indistinct. We anchored about  $1\frac{1}{2}$  miles above Atshiba in 3 fms. Veered to 24, current  $2\frac{1}{4}$  knots. Distance made good including stoppages 48 miles. Moon bright and clear. Several land insects came off, to sacrifice themselves at the [word]. The health of the men continues excellent, there is not a single man on the sick list today.

### 17. 13 September

Weighed at 5.30 a.m. and proceeded up the river, anchoring about a mile from the town of Bidon at 6.10 a.m. in  $5\frac{1}{4}$  fms. At 6.45 a.m. Dr. Baikie, Lieutenant Bouchier and myself, pulled in through the grass islands in the gig to call on the chief. His title is Ndāmarāki, and the district which extends along the river bank and for about a mile inland is called Kakānda, he is a very influential chief under Masaba and friendly to the cause of the English. We pulled round to the rear of the town to the chief landing place, ... On landing we were saluted with very noisome and [word] street odours, and proceeded through several narrow and muddy passages to the chief's home. It was built in the usual circular form about 18 feet in diameter and from 12 to 15 feet in height. The walls of mud a foot thick and the roof conical formed of a [word] work of bamboo covered with palm leaf thatch. This roof slopes down 10 feet beyond and below the top of the mud wall and is supported by upright and strengthening pieces round the circumference. Two openings in the hut with wooden doors and bamboo hinges are the sole means of ingress or ventilation, and a few logs of wood were burning in the centre without any other outlet for the smoke. The chief was seated on a raised dais about 6 inches above the floor which

was faced with hardened pieces of earthenware. On our entry he saluted us in the usual Arabic form ... An oblong shaped mat was spread for us close to the dais. On which we seated ourselves cross legged and the chief men and interpreters about 20 in number were ranged round the inner circumference of the hut. After an interchange of compliments, the distribution of presents took place. Mine consisted of 3 yards of navy blue cloth, a coloured scarf, two bottles of rum, and three cartridges of large grained powder. All these were presented one by one with due decorum by the head Kruman. Dr. Baikie's farewell presents followed. Then some attendant appeared with calabashes of rice, a large ram, and some dried buffalo meat, which was the Ndāmarāki's present to me. After this a message arrived from the native chief of the town with some fowls and several yams to whom I sent in return a scarf and looking glass, and rewarded the messenger with a bottle of rum according to custom. A long conference then earned the chief object of which was to obtain the dismissal from Lokoja of a native, one of Masaba's slaves, who had settled there for some time, but had been guilty of several delinquencies. Amongst others that of kidnapping and selling people for his own profit. After a good deal of discussion, his dismissal was obtained and he comes on with us to Masaba for judgement. He wanted now to take away with him on his discharge a woman whom he called his slave, but this could not possibly be allowed in a British settlement whose every resident is by treaty free. ... One or two other smaller matters having been discussed and arranged we rose after the usual salutations to depart. The chief presented me with the mat which we had sat upon, which I was very glad to accept as I had in secret much admired it. The oval or circular form of mat is only used by people in authority and the lower orders never use mats at all. The chief expressed a hope that he might 'see my face again' on my return. I have omitted to mention that he was attired in a very dirty robe or mantle, loose trousers, sandals, and a small cap, surmounted by the Mohammedan turban. ... Lieutenant Bouchier's scarlet uniform excited much admiration. ... The Mohammedan rule is generally descending down this river, and with it civilisation gradually creeps in and many barbarous customs are abolished. It is rumoured that Masaba intends at no very distant period to attack Iddah. We returned to the ship at 10 a.m. and were indeed glad to get away, as the smoke and closeness of the hut, the smells in the town and the powerful rays of the morning sun are not particularly refreshing before one's breakfast. Weighed at 10.20 a.m. and proceeded up the river. ... The village marked Adagi is in ruins. We are now entering on more rising ground. The hills are farther in the rear but not so lofty and they slope away very gradually to the river. The creeks are also more varied. In the rear is a remarkable peak, almost

200 or 300 feet high. Thermometer at 3 p.m. bridge  $92\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ , deck  $89^{\circ}$ , cabin  $86^{\circ}$ , sun  $112^{\circ}$ , engineroom  $130^{\circ}$ . At 3.30 passed Abāká and Gbāngīdī, saw a large number of oil palms on the opposite bank. Observed Rennell Mountains west-north-west and the town of Egga in the foreground over a grassy island. At 4.15 p.m. entered the small creek leading Egga and anchored off the town in  $2\frac{1}{4}$  fms veering to 12. Sent for wood but only got a canoe full just before we started again. The town is quite a curiosity in appearance. It is situated on an island about 10 feet above a river and is one densely packed mass of conical huts, containing about 10,000 inhabitants. The trade in ivory here is very great, although we did not see much this evening. There is very little tide in the creek, and the ship is close to the shore but the odours are so strong and mosquitoes so numerous, that I decided upon going out into the main river. One of our party brought down 9 large cranes with his rifle in as many minutes, who were endeavouring to roost in a large tree near the landing place. The inhabitants were lost in wonder at this feat of sportsmanship and loud were the exclamations of surprise as each bird fell. The youngsters dashing into the water contending for the defuncts. Weighed at 6.40 p.m. and steamed out of the creek and for some distance up the river, but although the moon was bright and clear the points were indistinct and having touched lightly on a bank, we reversed engines and anchored in  $3\frac{1}{4}$  fms at 7.5 p.m. veering to 24. Distance made good today  $28\frac{1}{2}$  miles. Mosquitoes and sand flies coming off in numbers as we are not far from a grass island.

### 18. 14 September

Weighed at 5.30 a.m. and proceeded up the river towards Ekfiogi marked Eofo on the chart. ... River banks much flooded. At 6 a.m. opened a long vista of the river, through which the magnificent outlines of the Rennell Mountains appeared of a deep blue colour against the clear morning sky. At 6.30 a.m. passed the town of Ekfiogi 5fms keeping close to left bank. The regular passage up the river is on the right bank, but we preferred this one. At 6.50 a.m. entered passage leading to Ishauthegga River. There is a large bush or tree on the point of the grassy island on the left hand as you enter. At 6.53 a.m. entered the river. ... Commenced noting down the soundings at intervals of 20 seconds, as also the directions of the bends and reaches. This we kept up until our arrival at Wunagi. At about 7.30 passed village of Tai, it was about half a mile inland on a little knoll on the left bank of river. During our passage up we struck occasionally and sometimes fouled the bank from the strength of the current, and anchored about noon to keep the ship's company dry during a rainsquall. Proceeded

up again at 7.15 p.m. when we anchored for the night. The mosquitoes and sand flies were so numerous that no one in the ship got much sleep.

### 19. 15 September

Weighed at daylight and proceeded up the river. Up to 10 a.m. counted 66 bends of the river. At 12.4 p.m. anchored ... 12.40 p.m. weighed and proceeded. This day's work was similar to the last with the usual amount of grounding, fouling of banks; warping and fending ship off. About 6 p.m. arrived at a very sharp bend of the river, round which the current was sweeping at least 2 knots. After trying in vain to warp the ship round it, we dropped down about a ships length and anchored at 6.40 p.m. for the night. It was clear with a bright moon and lightened occasionally in the north-east quarter. But a tornado never comes on when the moon is up, but as mosquitoes at that time are generally more numerous, great preparations were made for resisting the invasion.

### 20. 16 September

At 6 a.m. after the usual coffee, smoke and bathe, we laid out the bower anchor with 7 inch hawser as far round the bend as we could, then weighed starboard anchor and steamed gradually ahead, one revolution at a time. The tide keeping the cable broad on the port bow, until the anchor was well up and down, and ship working round on an arc of a circle close to the bank. When up and down we steamed fast and got clear up the stream. I have named this 'Investigator Bend'. This forenoon's work was less troublesome than we have hitherto had, the reaches being broader and longer and bends not as sharp. We only grounded once just in time for breakfast. The ground is more open and the banks much higher. At 10.50 a.m. we arrived off the village of Wunagi. It is situated on a hill on the right bank of the river. The natives crowded down to gaze at us but were afraid to come off. However about an hour after we landed the chief came off to salute one and brought a bundle of sugarcane as a present. I giving him in return a bottle of rum. A messenger was immediately despatched to Bidida, 8 miles distant, to acquaint King Masaba of our arrival, and to request horses and carriers for the journey. The health of the men was excellent and no one appears to have suffered from the hard work. Dr. Baikie I note here makes a note of the value of cowries in this country, which is about double that at Lagos. Here a string of 40 cowries is not unknown. 5 strings at Lagos make 1 head or 1000 which equals 1s 3d English. ... Articles can be purchased here in the markets at the low price of two cowries, an infinitesimal part in English money.

## 21. 17 September

A beautifully clear morning air healthy and a gentle breeze from the westward but the sun getting very hot towards 8 a.m. At 10 a.m. the King's messenger accompanied by five of Masaba's younger sons (of whom he has 42) came on board to see us and shortly afterwards the King's principal war chief and counsellor, who is however Masaba's slave, came down with a large retinue of horse and footmen to salute us. ... After the customary salutation the chief presented me with some gōro (or Kola) nuts,<sup>1</sup> in a native vessel comprised of brass and copper. These nuts are an expression of great friendship and intimated that Masaba welcomed us to his country. They are somewhat like horse chestnuts in appearance, are astringent and tonic in quality and taste very bitter, but if you drink water after them it leaves a sweet taste in the mouth. Masaba seems very much astonished at our unannounced arrival; the fact is that we have outrun the messengers sent up from Bidon and Lokoja. He sent to say that we must be careful not to remain too long at Wunagi on account of the falling of the water in the river. We have evidently taken everyone by surprise. ... The chief and his followers made a long stay and with the young sons went all over the ship. They are much pleased with some musical boxes and a harmonium we have onboard. Crowding round the Wardroom skylight to hear the Assistant Paymaster play and sing. They left about 12.30 p.m. to prepare the horse and baggage carriers to Bidda, and we were glad to get rid of them as the ship being covered with leaves, broken branches of trees, firewood splinters and no small allowance of dirt required a thorough cleaning. At 3.45 p.m. we landed and walked up an ascending path to the village where we found the horse and escort awaiting us. The party besides myself and the Coxswain, consisted of Lieutenant Bouchier RMLI, Dr. Baikie, Mr Maxwell, Assistant Paymaster, Mr Malther, engineer, and Mr Robins the artist.<sup>2</sup> ... The chief was impatient at our delay in landing, learning that the King could call him to account for detaining his strangers especially as he dared not return without us. But I had no desire to expose myself or party to the maximum heat of the tropical sun. The horses were rather small, poor and raw boned, but carried us well. Dr. Baikie lent us some of his European saddles, the native ones being uncomfortable, unwieldy and in a fall dangerous from

<sup>1</sup>*Penguin English Dictionary*, 2nd edn: cola, kola [kOla] West African tree; c. nut seed of this tree used as a tonic.

<sup>2</sup>Geary, *Nigeria Under British Rule*, pp. 165–8, Thomas Valentine Robins, an artist given passage onboard *Investigator* for the ascent in 1864; remained at Lokoja with Bouchier as Assistant Consul; 1865 left Lokoja with Bouchier; 1866 returned to Lokoja as Assistant Consul; d. 1867 at Lokoja; none of his work appears to have survived, possible artist of the painting 'Opening of the Saltash Bridge', May 1859.

the high, upright, pummels. The bits are very powerful and require a gentle hand. The escort was comprised of about six horsemen, armed with every variety of weapons, besides several runners on foot. ... A drummer preceded us playing a monotonous air on his tom-tom. After about an hours ride in single file up along the high ground, but not beyond a brisk walking pace, we came in sight of the city of Bidda. ... We rode nearly two miles through the city which contains 50,000 inhabitants. On arriving at an open space or market opposite to the King's residence we dismounted and were soon after conducted through a large covered porch, into an open court, at the upper end of which Masaba was seated, reclining on a mat and railway rug, flanked by cushions covered with cloth. The summons was so unexpected that we had no time to change our riding dress, and by some mistake Dr. Baikie who had come on purpose, almost an hour before, was not there to present us. So our first introduction was made through Abigah, the interpreter. The King appeared to be in a very generous mood which I hear is not always the case. He welcomed us cordially and after my introducing the different members of the party ... we were dismissed to our quarters for rest and refreshment. These quarters consisted of a small compound or enclosure containing about 4 huts of a circular form, each about 10 feet in diameter. In the centre was a little courtyard and a space was partitioned off as a latrine, a most unusual luxury in central Africa. After we had rested a while a large present arrived from the King, consisting of huge pans and bowls containing rice, yams, palm oil chops, stewed turtle, some limes, a sheep and some fowls. It is usual to give to the bearer of these presents a gratuity of about 1/10th the value of the gift. This custom we observed during our stay. To the repast we did ample justice after our days work, and then prepared our beds and couches for the night. We were rather pestered by the inhabitants, who in their curiosity endeavoured to crowd into the little yard, but to this we strongly objected and placed a mat across the doorway. But after all would not 'lions' be similarly or even worse treated in England?!

## 22. 18 September

Early in the morning the King sent the old chief to salute us and enquire after our health sending a present of some fine pigeons to me and some cooked rice to the servants. ... We made a capital breakfast on stewed fowls and yams, salmon, sardines and claret. Mr Bottle of Beer,<sup>1</sup> assisted

<sup>1</sup>Kroomen's names were often found to be difficult to remember or unpronounceable by Europeans and hence they were given nicknames, these names were used when entering Kroomen onto ships' books. Bottle of Beer was one of *Investigator's* Kroomen, other names included King George and Hard Tack.

by Jones, the Coxswain, officiated as Chef de Cuisine which part he performed admirably. ... As a tornado is coming on the King wishes us to take a long rest, he has not yet sent for us. The wind was from ENE but not heavy and there was more thunder, rain and lightning. However we had to retreat into the inner huts with our beds, mine had a little court or porch to it, partially protected by matting from the weather, which is cooler than inside the hut. The air is cool from the tornado, but there is never much wind in this town on account of its situation. Bidda can be also approached by way of the Kadūna River to within 14 miles. Dr. Baikie anchored there once, but coming up two years after, Masaba sent him a hint to keep the ship down in the Kwara and come up without it as he was doubtful of the effect it might have upon his chiefs and people, however he has made no allusion to me. This place would be very monotonous were there much rain, as even this shower which has only lasted two or three hours has given us a sense of imprisonment and discomfort and made the courtyard like a watercourse. ... While we were dining a messenger came to say that Masaba wished to see us all and salute us again. We excused ourselves until after dinner and then dressed in uniform and proceeded to the King's quarters, where we found him seated as before, outside his house. We seated ourselves on a mat of tanned bullock's hide and exchanged compliments. Masaba is a fine looking man of nearly 6 feet in height and about 52 years of age. He was plainly dressed in a white Tobe, trousers and cap, and his deportment is easy but dignified, indeed he quite looks a king. ... The King had before him, Captain Glover's last years presents a double barrelled gun and Colts Revolver and seemed especially proud to show that they had been kept in clean order. He asked if the river was clear and whether we had been molested on our passage up. Explaining that his influence extended down as far as Iddah and adding that he hoped Lieutenant Bouchier and he would be as friendly as he and Dr. Baikie had been with whom in seven years he had never had a quarrel. He asked me to request, that when the next vessel of war came up, plenty of powder and guns might be sent, as he could always get other articles from trading vessels, and his men are always asking for munitions of war. He also asked if I could take a camel and ostrich home for the Queen. He guaranteed that between Rabba and Idá, not a single cowry of ours should be lost, but asked that some influential person could be left behind at Lokoja with Lieutenant Bouchier to keep affairs in order, as he appeared very young to be left up by himself. This speech excited great merriment; they called Bouchier 'the young man'. ... the interview concluded. ... After our dismissal we walked down towards the principal market. ... It was a perfect Babel of sound and confusion and numbers were hurrying to and fro making their

latest purchases. Friday is the Sunday here, but it is not observed by the Nupe people who are heathens, this being a conquered country. ... There are a few mosquitoes and sand flies, but not troublesome.

### 23. 19 September

Morning cool and refreshing but foggy and inclined to rain, it cleared off at 7 a.m. Our ablutions were necessarily more limited here than on board ship, as the water has to be carried [by women] some considerable distance and our tubs consist of large calabashes. The women fetch and carry the water and indeed do a large portion of the heavy labour in many ways. ... While we were at breakfast our assistant surgeon, Dr Sweetnam, arrived on foot from Wunagi, bringing a note from Lieutenant Sandys to the effect, that the water in the creek had been observed from certain tide marks put up by the Second Master, to fall 6 inches in the last 48 hours. This rather startled me at first, but I intended to inform the King that I have resolved upon taking his advice about the possibility of the falling of the water, and shall order the ship down to Egga tomorrow at daylight. ... About 10 a.m. the King sent for us requesting that we might bring the presents with us. We proceeded to his quarters and found him seated as usual, but this time within a large reception hut, with some water, goro nuts and a few cowries before him. After we were seated he saluted us and hoped that we all had good news from home and that our friends were well.

The presentation of the gifts then commenced as follows:

Commodore	1 Revolver, 1 Gilt Ornamented Clock, 1 Silver Headed Malacca Cane, 1 Small Musical Box.
Lt. Governor Glover Lagos	A Case of Ornamental Pistols, A Bale of Satins and Cloths, 6 Kegs of Powder and some Brass and Tin Basins.
Dr. Baikie	A Silver Box, Damask Cloths, A Claret Jug, A Saddle Cloth and two models of English Carriages and Horses.
Lt Bouchier RMLI	Some Velvet Cloth and a Silver Spoon and Fork.
Lt Knowles as Commander of the Expedition.	Several Yards of Blue Cloth & Flannel, 6 Scarves, 4 Galls of Rum & a few Rockets and Blue Lights.

Dr. Eales	An Electro-plated Curry Bowl.
Mr Maxwell Asst Paymaster	A Silver Cup and a Musical Box.
Tappa, a Lagos Chief	A handsome sword.

Masaba received all the presents with evident pleasure and surprise and asked us to explain the revolver and wind up and adjust the clock and musical boxes. He expressed himself much gratified by the sentiments of friendship and goodwill shown towards him by the representatives of the government and hoped that this feeling would always exist. Many of these things he had never even seen or heard of, and was therefore doubly gratified in accepting them. Dr. Baikie said he had never seen King Masaba more pleased than on this present occasion. ... Masaba saluted Mr Sweetnam individually asking him (he evidently suspected it) if the water had fallen and if all was well onboard the ship. I replied that all was well and the water much as usual. We shortly afterwards retired. ... Late in the evening, however, the King ascertained that I had ordered the ship to leave at daylight and requested me to detain her until he could send down to the crew a suitable present, for all our kindness to him. I therefore despatched a special night messenger to countermand the sailing orders until the present arrives at Wunagi.

#### 24. 20–21 September

At daylight the party prepared to return to the ship but there was an interminable delay about horses and baggage carriers, and they did not all get away before 8 a.m. Dr. Baikie, Lieutenant Bouchier and myself remain behind until our mission is fulfilled. The gig will be left at Wunagi for us to return in. The King came down to Agibisaide, the chief's house this morning before breakfast and sent for us again. He expressed a desire that the regular trading vessels should come up next year, and that men of good principles and character should command them, so as properly to represent the English people. He hoped that the roads to Lagos would soon be open, and that both by that route and by the river the produce of both countries would be obtained. I said that I thought that it would be very desirable that the whole of the river should be in his hands and hoped that ere long, we should have to do with him alone. He replied that that was his wish also and that he was endeavouring by degrees to carry it into effect. There is no doubt as I previously remarked in this journal that as Masaba conquers this country, so civilisation will increase as these people are infinitely superior in intelligence to the barbarian tribes of the river

below the confluence. ... I passed the forenoon in writing up journals and whilst engaged in calligraphy under difficulties, who should come in but Lieutenant Sandy and Dr. Eales. The water has risen again to its former level, so we could afford to wait a little longer. This rise and fall is dependent upon the rains Dr. Baikie says, and entirely independent of the Kwara at this season. ...

## 25. 21 September

... Intense heat, noise, flies, and lassitude makes journal writing a work of some difficulty especially as one is disturbed every moment by some intelligent native wanting to 'trade' or by a whole posse of idler, curious visitors relieved by an occasional scuffle in the narrow lane outside the court. Old Elephants Marrow came in and I presented him with 4 yards of cloth, six of flannel and five florins. He is like the Lord Chamberlain between us and the King, and his principal war minister, but Masaba owns that his advice is generally bad. The King's dwarf, about 4 feet high, came in to salute me afterwards and I gave him 2/- at which he was delighted. One of Masaba's musicians came in too, he appeared a sort of half conjuror also, at least he carried an imitation snake in his pocket, which he made perform various evolutions. His instruments were a native tom-tom, or drum on which he played with his fingers, and a small horn, which he played like a flute. A blind singer was led to the gate; the song is like the music, very monotonous and with constant repetition. ...

## 26. 22 September

... 8.30 a.m. Received a note from Lieutenant Sandy that the water had fallen 15 inches and that without any contrary orders he would start down the river at 10.30 a.m. I hope he will get away this time, it will be a load of anxiety off my mind. Dr. Eales rode down post haste to catch the ship but missed her and had to return. About noon we were again sent for by the King ostensibly to fire the presents for the King's sister. ... The glass given by Lieutenant Sandy had been sent for her inspection, but she refused to look at it, fearing it was some magical delusion ... The interview began by a little play and joking and Masaba expressed unqualified surprise at Dr. Eales rapid travelling, indeed he doubted at first that he had reached Muniapi in the time. He very kindly gave orders for a horse, guide and cause for him to start at 2 p.m. for Muniapi, to catch the ship. Masaba said that having received great kindness from the Commadore, he would work to make him a suitable present, and asked me to make a choice from several fine ... tobes. I selected three and

remarked that the Commodore would be highly gratified by the expression of King Masaba's friendship. ... Masaba said that the traders coming up, instead of making flying visits, should settle for the year at Lokoja, which place, by the bye is said to be extremely healthy. There they could dispose of their goods with greater facility and would benefit all parties. He said that the cloth usually sent up by traders was all very well for the lower classes, but as regarded himself and immediate followers, the articles mostly required were arms, ammunition, red coral, and some coats of mail, a few specimens of which he showed us and which are impervious to poisoned arrows. Masaba repeated his former declaration that not a needle of ours should be lost between his country and Iddah, he would guarantee the safety of everything. To this I made my former response, that I hoped the whole river would be his to the sea, to the exclusion of the savage tribes at the mouth. He took up a handful of grass and said that it would be as easily accomplished as that. I now made an allusion to the ship's departure which was necessitated by the uncertainty of the depth of water ... and to say that my orders were imperative to return as soon as possible [and] I hoped he would dismiss me as soon as convenient, adding that were it not for my instructions I would willingly remain much longer, after the hospitable and courteous manner in which myself and companions had been received. He remarked that the river (the Ishautshegga) was a 'foolish river' but that the Kwara was up for a month or so yet. He accented to my desire to leave and asked me to send him word, what day I wished to take my departure. ...

### 27. 23 September

... Have felt unwell all the morning. I have decided on leaving (if we get away) on Sunday morning. This is Friday and the Mohommedan Sunday and the King goes in procession to the mosque. I hope to see him on the return. I was busily engaged in writing up journal all the morning. Many came in, but generally I am not much disturbed. ... I am writing this in the market place, seated on a native stool under the shade of a tree, surrounded by an admiring, noisy and curious crowd. One of the King's sons, a little fellow of 7 or 8 years old brandishes a large stick over his head and ever and anon makes a furious onslaught on those who are crowding me too much. ... Lieutenant Bouchier is very weak and feverish and unfortunately the quinine that Dr. Eales brought up has been mislaid. Dr. Baikie mentions a kind of country bitter, that is used as a febrifuge and sent for some for him. Dogs were howling all the night and the mosquitoes were troublesome.

## 28. 24 September

Walked out at 6 a.m. by the NNW gate across a fine level grass plain for about a mile until we arrived at a table topped hill of about 50 to 100 feet high. ... On arriving at the top a truly beautiful landscape was spread out around us. We had a most glorious view of the city of Bidda and surrounding country. ... As far as the eye can reach are farms or plantations belonging to Masaba; the natives tending and working there live in little grass huts in the Bush. The hilly horizon is about 5 or 6 miles distant on all sides. The Rennell Mountains were visible over the near range, but although their outlines were bold and distinct, they must be some 25 miles off. ... On our return we were sent for by the King who was on horseback outside, to view two grotesque objects mounted on steeds in the market place. They appeared to be accoutred in imitation of the knights of feudal times, but instead of mail the horse and man were protected by stout 1 inch saddle cloth, thickly padded and the cloak ornamented with ostrich feathers and worked in green leather and red and white colours. ... Altogether man and horse, the former armed with a sword and a tin front plate with two horns, are pretty heavily laden ... Their duty is to march in front of the army and receive all the arrows and darts which enter but do not pierce the armour, and after receiving the fire for some time, they retreat and the army advance to victory. They charged up to the King's residence at full gallop to our great amusement. Masaba now informed us formally, that he ... had ordered the baggage canoes to be prepared. He said he would see us in the evening. Lieutenant Bouchier is better this morning but still feverish and requires rest. ...

## 29. 25 September

A cool and cloudy morning and no power in the sun until after 8a.m. but it came out with its usual intensity afterwards. About 11a.m. we were sent for by the King who was seated outside his reception hut, surrounded by some of his people to whom he was showing a musical box. ... The King said that having received so much kindness from the representatives of the Queen of England and her government, as well as from ourselves during our visit, he had selected some presents which he hoped would convey the friendly sentiments he felt towards the English Queen and her people. He then presented me with the following specimens of the workmanship of the country:

For Her Majesty	{	A finely worked circular mat and a rich silk cloth. Also a 4 horned ram, from Bornon, central Africa, a great rarity.
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Commodore Wilmot	{ A finely worked silk robe and two man's cloths, country-made of silk, also a large black ram.
Lt Governor Glover	{ Two cloths worked in silk. 2 mats and a horse.

He then rose directing his people to bring in some more robes and cloths and from which he asked Dr. Baikie to select some for myself and three of my officers who had visited him. He also asked me again to choose between 2 horses for the Lt. Governor and said he would leave us to look at the presents, ... These were as follows, viz;

Myself	{ A white silk lined robe, 5 mats, a cloth worked with silk and a large ram.
Lieut. Sandy	{ A check robe and an oblong mat.
Dr. Eales	{ A robe, a cloth and a mat.
Mr Maxwell	{ A robe and a mat.

... On the King's return after thanking him for the presents, the conversation re-opened by a repetition of the articles he required for himself and for his people, viz for himself, arms, ammunition, silver, coral and coats of mail and for his people trade goods. He is evidently bent on conquering the whole of the Niger country and is endowed with no small amount of penetrative commonsense and judgement. ... He said that he had ordered the canoes two days ago and that we should soon be able to get away. I told him that Lieutenant Bouchier was ill with fever, that my gig was at Wunāgi, and that on that account I particularly wished to take my leave as soon as convenient to him. He said that he wished to send all the presents, horses, sheep, etc, down with us, so that there should be no delay and that everything should reach the ship at one time. He now said that he wished me particularly, as the Queen's messenger, to listen to the following and to convey his sentiments to her. When he first came to Bidda and succeeded to his brother's throne, about five years since, several of the neighbouring Kings pressed him to have nothing to do with the white people as they always wanted to take away other people's country from them, but he said that he would trust them until they behaved ill to him and would form his own opinion respecting them. The result he was happy to say had proved him right and to remain always on the friendly terms he was with the English at present. ... I replied that I ... hoped and believed that the sentiments towards my country as well as the hospitality

shown to us as its representatives would be duly appreciated in England, and the reception then broke up. We returned to our quarters, the King as usual sending us down some provisions, yams, pumpkins, etc. He will probably see us again to take leave. ... Lieutenant Bouchier is still down with fever and will most probably have to be carried down to Wunāgi in a hammock. The only medicine he is taking is country bitters. ...

### 30. 26 September

The weather cleared about 7a.m. but it was damp and uncomfortable. I sent round to the King about our departure, but our messengers crossed, and he sent to salute me and say that he was preparing for it. It is nothing but wait, wait in Africa. We employed our forenoon in packing up our loads which in all amounted to 11 or 12 in number. Lieutenant Bouchier is better and hoping to get away. I was much amused at the movements of the baggage carriers, they were all women, ... (those Negroes generally put all the hard labour off on to the women). They came in at 2.30p.m. and squabbled and chattered for an hour, the first ones selecting the lighter loads and taking them up half a dozen times. At last they got them outside the compound where they had more chattering and squabbling. ... At about 4 p.m. I found another messenger I had sent to the King to request a final interview had been sent back by the old chief who said that there was no necessity to take leave of Masaba, but that I could go when I pleased and a messenger would be sent to escort me beyond the city walls. I was determined not to be done this way and sent up again by Dr. Baikie and almost immediately we proceeded to the King's quarters ... Masaba was evidently rather put out at such short notice, but after we had been seated a few moments, he relapsed into his usual good humour and we exchanged compliments. The substance of my last conversation with him was as follows viz:

'When you reach England and see the Queen, tell her my only wish is to get munitions of war for myself and followers and trade goods for the people. For 7 years I have had plenty of trade goods and presents, but no arms and powder. There I am ready to buy and plenty of my people will buy goods. I am satisfied with all I have received in this form and now require the other. Not a needle can be lost between Rabba and Ida. I guarantee safety as far as that, beyond that you must open the river for yourselves. I thank you much for the presents which please me greatly, and I hope we shall always be friends. If you do not come up here next year; whatever you want, send me a letter, and I will procure anything you require. You must say to your Queen and people that I and Dr. Baikie have always been friends. No one in your country knows how much he

has done for Lokoja. Every man, woman, and child speak well of him here, and wherever he has gone. Tell the Queen particularly that if possible Dr. Baikie must come back to Africa, he is the man for the country, a very great, good, kind man. If you hear anything against him, say "It is a lie".'

I told the King that I was very glad I had the opportunity of taking leave of him personally, that I should not have considered my exit complete, had I not seen him, that I should always remember his kindness and I thanked him again in the name of Her Majesty, the government, myself and officers for his sentiments of friendship and hospitality. I then gave him a parting token of friendship, a hunting knife and a dark lantern; with the latter especially, he was greatly pleased, examining it himself. We then exchanged salutations. ... and so ended my last interview with Masaba, King of Nupe. We then returned to our compound and started out almost immediately afterwards ... At about 8 p.m. arrived at Wunagi but for several minutes we had to hold our horses and could get no reception from chief or people. At last however our matter was explained and we got into a large and roomy hut, where we disposed our baggage as it arrived. I went down to the river bank to see the gig, she was all right with two Krumen, but heavily laden, and we had to leave some gear behind which with the heavy baggage will come with Dr. Baikie. After we turned in a sort of vocal and instrumental serenade was commenced, apparently in our honour but as Lieutenant Bouchier was very unwell and all of us very tired, we requested them to leave us to the mosquitoes.

### 31. 27 September

Commenced operations at daylight, but did not finally start until 7 a.m. The chief accompanied us to the waterside and I made him a speech and shoved off to my intense satisfaction. At 7.45 passed passage with a large island and at 7.45 the road on the right bank leading to Aghé. 7.50 Mountains visible over trees ahead. We were pestered with a very disagreeable species of mangrove fly which give a very sharp bite and several dragon flies with curiously striped wings flittered about. 8.30 Mountains SEbE, touched ground with oars on a spit running out from the left bank. ... 9.27 arrived at 20 ft bank where we had grounded on coming up. Ran the gig to the bank to breakfast. Water, by the mark on the cliff had evidently fallen 3 feet. Lieutenant Bouchier very ill and nearly delirious. Sun very powerful. Traces of the ship's passage down were visible on both sides. 9.50 a.m. Proceeded. 10.10 Passed Investigator's Bend. River fallen by the trees a good deal. ... 1.42 p.m. Passed sharp bend, below which we anchored at 11.00 a.m. on the 14th instant. River

20 yards wide, current very strong here. 2.05 p.m. Stopped to dine. 2.45 p.m. Proceeded. ... Stopped to furl awning and bale boat out. 5.30 p.m. Proceeded. ... 6.20 p.m. Entered and paddled up Egga creek and on arriving near the ship was saluted with three hearty cheers, which were as heartily returned and most thankful was I to get back to my little ship and find officers and men in excellent health and no damage done to the ship on the passage down. Lieutenant Bourchier has had a very trying day, he could neither move nor stand when he got onboard and was put to bed immediately. We made the journey from Wunagi in 10¼ hours altogether deducting an hour and ¼ for stoppages, it must have been 40 miles at least and the Kruboyes worked splendidly and deserve great praise the boat being very deep and leaking a great deal. I was rather tired when I got onboard, having steered the boat down the whole way, but the excitement has as yet kept me from illness. Jones my coxswain has a slight attack of fever and has also strained his back in lifting some heavy boxes out of the gig.

### 32. 28 September

They had a great deal of trouble in getting the ship down the river; and did not arrive at Egga until 7 a.m. on Saturday, having left Wunagi on Thursday at 10 a.m. They fouled the bushes no end of times and grounded in 3½ feet in the centre of the channel where we had been led to expect deep water. They were three hours on shore, had to land the provisions and blow the boilers out and then had to heave her bodily off right abeam. My opinion is, after our passage down in the gig yesterday and my experience previously in the ship that it is hazardous for any vessel to attempt the navigation of the river, unless she is much shorter than the *Investigator*, has powerful steering apparatus, or a double rudder and paddles that can be worked independently of each other and moreover of not more than 3 or 4 feet draught, at most. A screw would be objectionable on account of the snags and bushes on the banks. The framing of the wheels should also be stoutly made and fixed and there should be an outer bearing to the paddle shaft. A few spare floats would also be indispensable as one or two of ours have suffered slightly. Again, the river should be ascended a month earlier than we did for the water has now fallen 3 or 4 feet and had we detained the ship longer we should probably have been done for this year at least. Dr. Baikie tells us the river is influenced by the rains and up to a [words missing] this may be so and indeed during our stay at Wunagi it rose and fell 5 inches, but when we left it had fallen 15 inches and it was quite time to be off. I think our visit had a good moral effect on Masaba and his people, showing what the English could do if

they tried and of course we never mentioned the difficulties we met with but implied that we should now be able to come up as a matter of course. ... This is a very hot day indeed. I have hardly ever felt anything like the heat of this place and would always recommend the outer anchorage, except for wooding. Crowds of natives are alongside and the din of voices is absolutely deafening and distracting. ... The ship's company continue in very good health, the few in the list with one exception have only got boils. We issued processed meat twice a week and fowls are easily procured for bottles. Goat mutton too is always procurable so the men do not eat much salt meat. ... Went out shooting with Dr. Eales this evening in the gig. ... Lieutenant Bouchier is a little better. I think he got back only just in time, he is still seriously ill and very weak.

### 33. 29 September

Wood coming in very slowly, we have now got about 4 fms or one days steaming. They charged two heads of cowries at first for what should cost  $\frac{1}{2}$  a head; but were soon made to come down. We are now only waiting for wood and for Dr. Baikie and the horses and if it were not for the wood I would wait outside as I consider this anchorage from the absence of wind and its close proximity to the filthy [city] to be anything but healthy. However I shall go out tonight at all events. At 11.30 a.m. Dr. Baikie returned with all his loads. ... This is the driest September Dr. Baikie has ever seen here, which may possibly account for the early fall of the river. Here at Egga the water has fallen only 2 inches. Some of our party crossed over to the left bank this morning and obtained a magnificent view of the river and surrounding country from the top of a hill. ... I intended having made one of the party and indeed projected it but was now so unwell that I had to go on the sick list. ... At 5.30 p.m. weighed and steamed out of the creek and about 7 miles down the river where we anchored for the night. Numbers of mosquitoes onboard. Lieutenant Bouchier is extremely weak and much shaken, that I much doubt if he will be able to remain at Lokoja and certainly not without someone to keep him company. No one should be up here for a year without a soul to converse to. I am very unwell this evening, suffering from diarrhoea.

### 34. 30 September

Weighed at 5.30 a.m. and proceeded down the Kwara, burning wood. Revolutions of engines 24, with 12 to 14lbs of steam. 7.45 a.m. passed Bougadi, and re-entered main river at 8 a.m. 8.20 a.m. anchored off Bidon in  $3\frac{1}{2}$  fms. ... Received a load of firewood. 12.05 p.m. weighed and

proceeded. ... anchoring off Lokoja at 5.40 p.m. in 6¼ fms, veered to 36 fms and sent native passengers and live stock on shore. During our absence of three weeks the river had risen considerably, as much as 4 or 5 feet, and the grassy island astern of us was only just visible by a bush at either end. ...

### 35. 1 October

Lieutenant Bouchier is improving gradually. Took coal on board from cargo boat and moved her to the tree again. ... We had a tornado with heavy rain about 2 a.m. from NE, it cooled the air considerably but drove all the deck sleepers below.

### 36. 2 October

Placed a mark on the tree at the landing place to denote the rise and fall of river. Lieutenant Bouchier is better. I am still on the sick list. Lieutenant Sandys read divine service.

### 37. 3 October

Tornado with rain at 1 a.m. Air clear and thermometer down to 78°. Water risen by the mark a little. About 1 p.m. Bishop Crowther came up from Igbegbe. He gave satisfactory accounts of his progress, having been down to Iddah where he remained a week and paved the way for an interview with the Atta on our return. ... The Bishop returns to Igbegbe to wait for us and will decide on our arrival whether he will remain at Onitsha or come back to Lagos. Dr. Baikie is busily employed on shore. Mr Mather, engineer, is attacked with dysentery and this evening is very unwell.

### 38. 4 October

Dr. Baikie embarked at daylight and at 6.10 we weighed and proceeded up the Binue our destination is Yuniaha or Humaiha. Here the King of the eastern half of Igbara, by title Lāmăgě, resides. Dr. Baikie wished to introduce Lieutenant Bouchier to him as he is a very influential person. We are the third vessel only that has ever ascended this great stream. Dr. Baikie has penetrated 300 miles up the Binue as far as the confluence of two streams the Binue and the Fan. Allen and Oldfield ascended in 1833, Dr. Baikie in 1854. Dr. Baikie crossed over on his exploring journey into Adamara in 1857, the river narrows there considerably. Ivory comes from there in considerable quantities. ... 12.40 Anchored off Yuniaha town in

3fms and sent interpreters on shore with a message to the King. He is a Mohammedan and on that account not much in favour with his people. He is nominally subject to the Atta of Egara (King of Iddah) who nominates his successor. He continues also to be on friendly terms with Masaba. ... At Iddah and Gbegbe there are human sacrifice, and as the Yorubars they are the greatest heathen on the coast. At Abo their practice, if a great man dies is to bury two persons, generally a man and a women, alive; if they hear the groans for some time it is a bad omen, if they cannot it is a good one.

#### 39. 5 October

Lieutenant Bouchier was introduced yesterday to the King by Dr. Baikie; the interview was a satisfactory one. I was too unwell to attend. Weighed at daylight and returned to Lokoja anchoring there at 2.30 p.m.

#### 40. 6 October

Fine day, not too warm. A canoe came up from Igbege; sent Bottle of Beer and 3 Kroomen back in her to split and store firewood in readiness for our arrival. We hope to get away on Thursday next.

#### 41. 7 October

Day fine and cloudy. Threatening appearance to ENE but nothing came of it except a cool and refreshing breeze. The ship's company land to bathe every evening and I send them occasionally at 4 p.m. for a walk. They are all well. Mr Robins the artist has decided on remaining at Lokoja with Lieutenant Bouchier to assist him and be a companion as well as to help cultivate cotton and develop the resources of the country. I am very glad of this for Lieutenant Bouchier's sake as he should never have been left up here alone without a European companion, it would be certain death to him.

#### 42. 8 October

A party went on a shooting expedition down the river this morning ... There is no perceptible difference in the water today. Weather very hot, thermometer 85° in the shade this morning and 98° at 2 p.m. The shooting party returned at sunset ...

**43. 9 October**

Morning cool and cloudy, but not in the middle of the day. Performed divine service.

**44. 10 October**

At 8.20 a.m. Bishop Crowther arrived from Igbegbe. 9.15 Lieutenant Bouchier landed under a salute of 7 guns to relieve Dr. Baikie. Weather hot and close. Thermometer at 2 p.m.  $93\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ . Lightning a good deal in the evening. Krumen collecting firewood. Water fallen 2ft 6ins below the original mark and the island astern is again showing above water.

**45. 11 October**

I gave the Blue Jackets leave to go on a picnic for the day and they started at daybreak with rifles and ascended Mount Lokoja. The men returned in the evening having enjoyed themselves very much. They saw a large flock of Guinea fowl and many traces of elephants. Dr. Baikie assembled the inhabitants and introduced them all to Lieutenant Bouchier. Dr. Baikie has selected a piece of ground for a mission station which will shortly be established here. Dr. Baikie has two services in his house every Sunday, morning in English, afternoon in Hausa. He has translated the Book of Common Prayer and portions of the Bible into the Hausa tongue. Mr Mather, engineer, left for Igbegbe to see about wood.

**46. 12 October**

Received Dr. Baikie's numerous packages. Embarked the horses and other animals. Gave a farewell dinner in the evening to Dr. Baikie and Lieutenant Bouchier. Dr. Baikie embarked this morning and was saluted with 7 guns. ... Heavy tornado about midnight. Placed a wooden cross on Lieutenant Bedford's grave with the date of his death and his name.

**47. 13 October**

Lieutenant Bouchier came onboard to take leave. Cheered him as pulled onshore. Dr. Baikie will follow us to Igbegbe in a canoe. 8.30 Weighed and steamed down to Igbegbe anchoring there at 9.12 a.m. in 5fms, veered to 24. Temperature fell  $1^{\circ}$  as we came down. There appears to be plenty of firewood stacked on the beach. ... 3p.m. Rain and wind from the eastward. Thermometer at  $78^{\circ}$  at 5 p.m. King visited me and I explained

my reasons for not coming to see him. After a long conversation on various subjects he left again, seemingly well pleased at the way I had received him. A mission is to be established shortly at Iddah. Sheep were procured at 4/- a piece.

#### 48. 14 October

Morning cool, temperature 78°. Dr. Baikie not arrived yet. Bishop Crowther came onboard. ... At 11.15 the Igbege chiefs visited me and brought more yams, etc. Dr. Baikie arrived at 11.30 a.m.; he left Lieutenant Bouchier and Mr Robins in good spirits. Water falling gradually. Weighed at 11.40 and proceeded down the Kwara. At 3.30 p.m. anchored off the village of Shutter Island. Lieutenant Sandys and Bishop Crowther visited the chief and he followed them onboard to see Dr. Baikie and myself. They were shown round my cabin, and the ship and the chief on seeing the former, said, 'I can now die happy tomorrow.' Altogether they seemed much pleased. 4.30 p.m. Weighed and proceeded. 6.20 Anchored at Iddah. Current very strong at 3 knots. Bishop Crowther landed and sent a message to the Atta, who said he would see us tomorrow.

#### 49. 15 October

Heavy rain at daybreak. At 9 a.m. Lieutenant Sandys, Dr. Baikie and Mr Maxwell, Assistant Paymaster, landed and being joined by Bishop Crowther, after much delay had an interview with the Atta. They gave him a handsome present and he seemed much pleased. ... He promised a piece of ground for the mission which is very satisfactory. The party returned at 4 p.m. and at 4.25 weighed and proceeded. Anchoring at 6.15 p.m. in 6fms. Current 2 knots.

#### 50. 16 October

5.30 a.m. Weighed and proceeded. Heavy atmosphere with drizzling rain. River apparently fallen about 18 inches. 10.50 Tornado with heavy rain from ENE. Anchored above Asita. 11.18 Weighed and at 11.45 anchored off the Mission House at Ouitsha in 5½ fms veered to 30. Bishop Crowther proceeded to the mission church at once to ordain Mr Coomber, the catechist. He will proceed to Iddah. The people here are savage and as previous also indolent. Human sacrifices are still carried on. Lieutenant Sandys visited the King in the evening and made him a present with which he was well pleased. Five fathoms of wood have been collected but we wanted more. The wood during the trip has only cost us about £20.

Evening cool and refreshing. The water is higher here than when we came up, but has fallen about 10 inches.

### 51. 17 October

7 a.m. Bishop came onboard and having received word we weighed and steamed down the river. 12.25 Anchored off Ibo [Ebo] creek. I proceeded on shore to visit the King with Dr. Baikie and the Bishop, but on the way we met the chief Ishūkuma who has great influence here, and he insisted on our coming to his house, and then returning onboard with us, and the end of it was that I did not have time to see the King's house, he sent his messenger to me and I sent him a present. I spoke to Ishūkuma about the robbery of goods that took place when Laird's factory was washed away and he promised to pay for the things, even now if we would wait, in Palm oil, and then he hoped another factory would be established. I sent to tell the King how I had been prevented from seeing him. Ishūkuma promised again that the value of the goods plundered from the factory should be paid in Palm Oil next year, and seems most anxious that trade should be established. I then wished him goodbye having made him a present, and at 3.10 p.m. we weighed and proceeded onwards. At 6.20 we anchored in 5½ fms just off South Point of Grass Island. Current 2.5 knots.

### 52. 18 October

5.20 a.m. Weighed and proceeded down Kwara. Morning cool and cloudy. 6.45 Passed Kavama village. The chief came out as we passed, in full dress and seemed disappointed that we did not stop. No signs of hostility at any of the villages. Wood cut and stacked in considerable quantities. 3.25 Entered Louis creek. 3.35 Opened the mouth of the Nun. Stopped and veered cargo boat astern. 4.35 Anchored off factory at Trotter Point. Found the schooner *Manchester* here. Made a short address to the ship's company. Captain Derecourt came onboard; he informs us that oil is abundant here. Commenced coaling, Captain Derecourt affording us much assistance by lending us his large canoe and Kroomen. Took in all the coal by 8.45 p.m. Night comparatively cool.

### 53. 19 October

6.20 a.m. Weighed and shifted berth to Mission House off Akassa. Thermometer 80°. Went ashore to visit the factory. Three canoes came in laden with oil. Captain Derecourt cannot buy having expended all his goods. About 11 a.m. the canoe coming alongside was swept under the

paddle box and swamped; but all escaped safely. Dr. Eales managed to get up the side. The Kroomen had to swim for it. Shifted closer in out of the tide. At 2 p.m. had a thanksgiving service for our safe return, Bishop Crowther officiated. After church Bishop Crowther and Dr. Baikie left us. The former remains here some little time to arrange the affairs of the mission. The latter proceeds to the Nun to await the arrival of the homeward mail. 5.10 Weighed and steamed out over the Bar. Least water  $2\frac{1}{4}$  fms. 8 p.m. shaped course for Lagos.

#### 54. 20 October

2.30 a.m. Starboard hawser parted in the [?] stopped and recovered ditto. 9.00 Divisions and prayers. 11.30 Mustered by Open List. 1 p.m. Port hawser stranded, stopped and recovered ditto. Thermometer  $81^{\circ}$ .

#### 55. 21 October

Found in the middle watch that packing had worked in between slide pin of the starboard cylinder, starboard engine not keeping steam. 9.00 Prayers. 2.30 p.m. observed *Leander*<sup>1</sup> at anchor in Lagos Roads, *Ariadne*<sup>2</sup> coming out. Commenced burning coal bags. 3.00 p.m. Anchored in Lagos Roads. Sent to borrow 10 bags of coal from *Leander*. Put fires out to make good defects. 5.30 mail steamer arrived from England, received mails.

#### 56. 22 October

10.00 a.m. Weighed and proceeded in over the Lagos Bar and anchored off Government House. No serious cases of sickness onboard.

<sup>1</sup>Lyon and Winfield, *The Sail and Steam Navy List*, *Leander*. Length 241ft 0in between perpendiculars, 205ft 8in keel for tonnage; breadth 50ft 11in; draught 18ft 0in (fwd), 23ft 4in (aft); 2,760 bm; 3,539 displacement; 400 nominal horse power.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., *Ariadne*. Length 280ft 0in between perpendiculars, 245ft 8in keel for tonnage; breadth 50ft 0in; 3,215 bm; 4,261 displacement; 3,350 indicated horse power; 26 guns.



## VIII

### THE DIARY OF SIGNAL BOSUN HENRY EASON: THE NAVAL BRIGADE IN THE ZULU WAR, 1879

*Edited by*  
*Paul Quinn*

#### **The Manuscript**

The manuscript of Henry Eason's diaries was written over a period of about 30 years. It consists of 13 exercise books. His handwriting is not the best copperplate, but can be read without a great deal of difficulty and, once one is familiar with it, understood without effort or interpretation. The diary has been handed down within the Eason family, being now in the possession of Commander Christopher Eason, RN, Retd, OBE – his grandson. The current intention is that it will remain with the family. It is as accurately written as one could expect for a document mostly composed by the dim light of a mess deck in the days of transition from sail to steam. The only corrections used in this transcription are to rectify obvious mistakes such as the failure on occasion to begin sentences with capitals, failure to punctuate, and similar errors. His spelling is sometimes awry, and there is an occasional lapse of grammar, but it has not been necessary to correct these. There are also differences between the common usage of some words and phrases between his day and the present. Again, these have been allowed to stand, as they are an accurate representation of the times and do not obscure meaning. The most difficult words to present accurately are words that are probably nicknames for places, some of which obscure the real place name. One such is 'Saccharine', which is untraceable, and could not be Shakaskraal, which is too far north for the context in which it is used.<sup>1</sup> Others are probably farms, which are not marked on any of the available maps. There are also various versions of place names, for example traditionalists called one of the rivers the Tugela, and the town of that name is given the same spelling. Probably the most accurate

<sup>1</sup>There is a long history of the humorous use of approximations and substituted words for names in the Royal Navy, applying to both place and ship names, e.g. HMS *Exploder* for the submarine HMS *Explorer*. In this document it seems to have been applied to Zulu names that are strange to the ear.

present-day spelling is Thukela. These variations come about because of the difficulty of rendering Zulu sounds into English spelling. The usage here is predominantly that contemporary with events, but more modern alternatives are often given in brackets.

Eason's language reflects the common prejudices of his day when writing about Africans. This feature has not been bowdlerised, as it represents the usage of the time. The British, including the Royal Navy, had an arrogance towards all other nations at this time, but the Blacks, Chinese, Indians, and others, received epithets no more insulting than those that were applied to some European near neighbours, many of whom were actively despised. When he was in contact with them, Eason mixed with other races without any friction, as is revealed in his accounts of runs ashore recounted in other places in his diaries.<sup>1</sup> Like many British seamen, he had an abiding respect for the abilities of West African 'Kroomen'.<sup>2</sup>

This transcription concerns one of the highlights of Eason's sea-going career – his involvement with the Naval Brigade in the Zulu War of 1879 during the three-year cruise of HMS *Shah* (1876–79) while *Shah* was on the way home from the Pacific. Sea fights were rare at this time, but *Shah* had been involved in one (in which some quite serious strategic lessons had been learned) with the armoured Peruvian turret ship *Huascar*<sup>3</sup> during the earlier part of the cruise. A transcription of Eason's diary entries concerning this action has already been published.<sup>4</sup> While with the Naval Brigade, he fought in the battle of Gingindlovu and established communications with the besieged town of Ekowe [Eshowe] by penetrating behind enemy lines. Tropical illness finally removed him from the campaign, but he had the good fortune to recover in time to join the *Shah* on her way home to pay off.

I am most grateful to Commander Christopher Eason for making his grandfather's diaries available to me.

<sup>1</sup>Although, untypically for a British seaman, he found Tahitian women ugly because of their wide mouths. This did not prevent him from joining in their dances.

<sup>2</sup>These characters were able to turn their hands to any job aboard ship, and are known to have run the engine rooms of British exploration ships in the unhealthy waters of the West African rivers. See, for example, Macgregor Laird and R.A.K. Oldfield, *Narrative of an Expedition into the Interior of Africa* (2 vols, London, 1837).

<sup>3</sup>*Huascar*, Peruvian armoured turret ship, 1,170 tons, two 8-inch muzzle-loading rifles (MLRs), 1866; ordered by Peru and Chile to repel an attempt by Spain to regain her former colonies; Peruvian Navy from 1866; captured by Chile, 1879, fought in six battles; submarine depot ship 1930; museum ship 1970. Extant.

<sup>4</sup>Paul Quinn and Christopher Eason, 'Shah Versus Huascar: The Diary of Henry Eason', *Mariner's Mirror*, 86 (2000), 285–301.

## The Author

Henry William Eason was born in 1850. While we have no record of his formative years, it is obvious that he received some education at a time when schooling was not compulsory. He tells us that he joined the Royal Navy as a boy in November 1864, and that he kept a diary for 30 years of the time he served. The diary seems to have evolved from an official task – that of keeping a record of the sails in use. Quite remarkably, he was not the only lower deck diarist aboard the *Shah*. The other one was a gunner, Samuel Leadbetter, whose diary is in the Royal Naval Museum at Portsmouth. They were not aware of each other's activities.

Eason's diary for Tuesday, 5 November 1878 reads:

Just 14 years ago today I prevailed upon my dear father to take us on board the old *Frederick William*,<sup>1</sup> then the guard ship at Portland, to see if they would take me in Her Majesty's service, but I did not join really till the 7th, two days after. Now that fourteen years has passed and I look back I think I may have done many a worse thing, although I am sorry to say that I went deliberately against my dear mother and father's wish. But a youngster like I wanted to see the world and I must say my wish has been gratified to a certain extent. Many changes have taken place since then, but thank God all our family are still living, and I hope my dear father and mother will live long after I am out of this noble service, and see me enjoy the fruits of my labour.

He was present at the opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 as an able seaman. The following year he was promoted to Signalmen Second Class. In 1872 he was awarded the Royal Humane Society's silver medal for saving the life of a shipmate who fell from aloft in HMS *Endymion*<sup>2</sup> on a dark night in the English Channel. Still with *Endymion*, he was present in Spanish waters when she prevented Carlist rebels from bombarding civilians ashore during the Second Carlist War, 1873–76.<sup>3</sup> When *Endymion* paid off in 1874 Eason joined the *Duke of Wellington*<sup>4</sup> on harbour service,

<sup>1</sup>*Frederick William*, ex *Royal Frederick*, first rate wooden screw ship 3,241 tons, 1860; renamed *Worcester* training ship 1876; sold 1948, foundered in the Thames in the same year. Note that where a ship was renamed before commissioning, the standard reference work, J. J. Colledge, *Ships of the Royal Navy* (2 vols, 2nd edn, London, 1987), only gives the date for the second name.

<sup>2</sup>*Endymion*, wooden screw frigate, 2,486 tons, 1865; sold as a hulk 1885; broken up 1905.

<sup>3</sup>Spain was in turmoil at this time. After various insurgencies, King Amadeus, unable to restore order, abdicated. The Carlists held Catalonia and wanted to place Don Carlos on the throne. Ultimately, in 1875, Alfonso XII was recognised throughout Spain, and the Carlist challenge progressively faded.

<sup>4</sup>*Duke of Wellington*, ex *Windsor Castle*, first rate wooden screw ship, 3,771 tons 1852; harbour service 1863; sold 1904.



V Portrait of Henry Eason as a Yeoman of Signals

and took advantage of his time at home to get married to his fiancée Jane at Holy Trinity Church, Bristol. Their first child, Amy, was born in September 1875. He was promoted to Chief Yeoman of Signals in 1876 while still in the *Duke of Wellington*. As personnel of this rank only

attended admirals, he took it as a sign that he was about to be posted to a flagship. He mustered aboard the hulk *Bellerophon*,<sup>1</sup> where the ship's company of the new iron frigate HMS *Shah* was assembling in August, and duly joined her for the start of her first and only commission on 2 October 1876. She departed for the South Pacific Station in December under the command of Captain Richard Bradshaw. Rear Admiral F. R. de Horsey was already on station, and remained there after *Shah* left three years later. It was to be an adventurous cruise and was the highlight of Eason's sea-going career.

In March 1890 the Admiralty introduced the warrant rank of Chief Signal Boatswain, and Eason was made up to that rank in 1900 at the age of 50 after 36 years' service. Eason was then transferred to HMS *Victory*<sup>2</sup> as signals instructor, receiving an allowance of 1/6d per day while holding that post. While in *Victory* he devised the system of instruction in wireless telegraphy, signals and heliography. In 1892 he compiled the first universal signals handbook that the Royal Navy ever had. Eason had been verbally promised a bonus of £50 and authorship for this work; in the event he only received £25, and no acknowledgement. He blamed this on political spite. He was a Tory, chairman of the Portsmouth Conservative Association, and between his completion of the work and its issue a Liberal government took over.

In 1894 he joined HMS *Centurion*,<sup>3</sup> when she was flagship of the China squadron. The Chino-Japanese war was raging, and he witnessed, but did not take part in, several bloody actions such as the attack on Wei-Hai-Wei by the Japanese fleet.<sup>4</sup>

In 1903 he was commissioned with the rank of lieutenant. Such appointments from the lower deck had not been made since the Napoleonic wars. He was placed on the retired list in 1904, after almost 40 years' service. In 1914 he was recalled, and served for the duration of the Great War at the dockyard signal station, Portsmouth, with the rank of lieutenant commander, where his signals expertise was most welcome. He finally retired in 1918.

<sup>1</sup>*Waterloo*, ex *Talavera*, wooden third rate, 1817; renamed *Bellerophon* 1824; harbour service, 1848; sold 1892.

<sup>2</sup>Then, as now, HMS *Victory* was classified as a ship on harbour duty, but in Eason's time she was still afloat and served as a base ship for several functions.

<sup>3</sup>*Centurion*, armoured steam battleship, 10,500 tons, four 10-inch in turrets, ten 4.7-inch, all breach loading rifles (BLRs), 1892; sold to break up, 1910.

<sup>4</sup>In this action the Japanese attacked the supposedly modernised ironclads of the Chinese in a defended harbour. The Japanese were by this time equipped with the latest British naval technology, supplied predominantly by Sir William Armstrong's industrial complex, and the Chinese fleet (which was in any case poorly disposed) found its armour vulnerable, and was effectively destroyed, with little ability to retaliate.

Eason's death in 1924 was marked by this obituary in the *Portsmouth Evening News*:

**A NAVAL PIONEER.** Death of Lieut.-Comdr. Eason at  
Portsmouth

A notable naval personality is lost to Portsmouth by the death, which occurred on Saturday, Nov. 2 at his residence, 'Stubington', London Road, North End, of Lieut.-Comdr. H. W. Eason. The late officer, who was 76 [*sic*] years of age, had been the People's Warden at St. Mark's Church, North End, for the last five years.

Lieut.-Comdr. Eason entered the Royal Navy in 1864, and served first in H.M.S. *Endymion*. While on that commission he jumped overboard on a dark night in the English Channel and saved the life of a shipmate who had fallen from aloft. (Royal Humane Society silver medal.) Afterwards he served in H.M.S. *Shah* when that vessel engaged the Peruvian rebel turret ship *Huscar* [*sic*]. He landed with the Naval Brigade in the Zulu War, 1879, and took part in the battle of Gingihlovo [*sic*] and the relief of Ekowe. (African Medal, Ekowe clasp.) During this service he opened up communication by means of an extemporised heliograph, after travelling some miles into the enemy's territory on horseback.

He later qualified in the London School of Telegraphy as a telegraphist. He was promoted to warrant rank as Signal Boatswain in 1890, became Chief Signals Boatswain in 1900, Lieutenant in 1903, and Lieutenant-Commander in 1911, while on the retired list. He was specially commended by the Admiralty, and granted an award in connection with the compilation of a Manual of Signals for H.M. Fleet. Afterwards he served in H.M.S. *Centurion* in China, 1894-97, and was present at the capture of Wei-Hai-Wei by the Japanese fleet.

He was the first signals officer to be promoted to the rank of Chief Signals Boatswain, and also the first officer of that rank to be advanced to Lieutenant. He served during the Great War at the Semaphore Tower, Portsmouth Dockyard.

The funeral took place at Kingston Cemetery on Saturday last, being preceded by a service at St. Mark's church at noon.

That Eason was a brave man is proved by events, but that did not mean that he was insensitive. He was deeply religious and a Church of England communicant all his life. His hobby was the stage – as an amateur actor, a provider of small plots for his shipmates to perform, and as a member of the audience at professional performances. He never missed an opportunity to attend the theatre, and seems to have been

somewhat catholic in his tastes. He was devoted to his family, and one of his younger female relatives once described him as 'a comfortable man to be with'.

## The Ship

HMS *Shah* was launched at Portsmouth dockyard in September 1873. Originally to have been called HMS *Blond*, she was renamed in honour of the Shah of Persia, who was paying Queen Victoria the first state visit by a Persian monarch. *Shah* was built of iron, screw propelled, fully rigged and rated as a frigate, as she only had one gun deck.<sup>1</sup> Her displacement was 6,250 tons; she was designed for speed – over 16 knots on her trials. Her hull was wood sheathed and coppered up to the waterline to avoid fouling problems and to preserve her speed on long voyages. She was a novel concept in having a heavy armament but no armour, so as to keep her weight down and give her a high speed. Her armament was two 9-inch MLRs<sup>2</sup> mounted to fire fore and aft, sixteen 7-inch MLRs and eight 64-pounders. She was fitted with two Whitehead torpedo launchers forward of the 7-inch battery.<sup>3</sup> Luckily, she survived unharmed from her one battle.<sup>4,5</sup> On her return, she was laid up 'in ordinary' at Portsmouth, and then converted to coal hulk *C470*. On 9 September 1919 she was sold out and became a sailing ship. She was wrecked in Bermuda in 1926.

<sup>1</sup>Many iron ships, including the armoured *Warrior* and *Black Prince*, were given this rating in spite of the fact that they were four or more times the tonnage of any previous frigate.

<sup>2</sup>Muzzle-loading rifles (MLRs). These were the very latest guns at this time, having a wrought-iron construction. First devised by Captain Theophilus Blakely to solve the problems of handling heavy cast-iron guns on the battlefields of the Crimea, they were much lighter in weight and also longer-lasting than cast-iron guns when rifled. Sir Joseph Whitworth and Sir William Armstrong rapidly took up the idea. The latter had greater naval success than the other two, as he paid more attention to the mountings of the largest guns. Armstrong was introducing slower-burning propellants than gunpowder at this date, which enabled breach-loading rifles (BLRs) of much greater performance to be built, using the same basic construction. Many ships were retrofitted with these improved guns.

<sup>3</sup>These launchers were a novelty, and had been developed experimentally in *Shah's* sister ship *Inconstant*. Whitehead disapproved, as he had not designed the torpedo for such a launch, but the device was a success, and the Admiralty were not going to be dissuaded.

<sup>4</sup>This encounter made it abundantly clear that such confrontations were risky in the extreme for unarmoured ships, and second-rate armoured turret ships were afterwards employed on stations where armoured vessels might be encountered.

<sup>5</sup>Admiral de Horsey was not convicted of any wrong-doing on his return to Britain, but was not employed at sea again when his tour of duty on the South American station was concluded.

## The Zulu War

The Earl of Carnarvon<sup>1</sup> had, since 1874, been trying to consolidate various colonial territories in South Africa. He could have succeeded if the matter had been negotiated by diplomats alone, but diplomacy was always liable to be upset by a red-necked element among the settlers and ambitious Britons who exploited the remoteness of London from the actual territories. The former saw the neighbouring black kingdoms as a security risk to the peaceful development of their land holdings. Most respected and feared were the Zulu, who had a strong warrior tradition.<sup>2</sup> Since about 1820 the Zulu army had been progressively reformed and modernised, evolving a formation known as the Impi. This formed mass infantry into a crescent shape, the outer ends of the crescent leading the centre. Their system of fighting was for the massive central section to engage the enemy in a battle of attrition, while the ends outflanked and encircled him. An Impi normally contained between 3,000 and 15,000 men, and Cetshawayo had enough warriors at the time of the Zulu War to form several Impis. The Zulus were skilled metalworkers and their weapons, mainly lightweight iron-tipped spears which they either threw or used as pikes, were truly dangerous. Furthermore, a few rifles and muskets had fallen into their hands, and these were added to the Impi to provide sniper fire from a distance. The number of such snipers was greatly increased shortly after the beginning of the war by the capture of British weapons at the Battle of Isandlwana. The standard British staff plan to deal with an Impi was to treat it as a cavalry charge. Essentially, this meant forming a square, the bayonets and small arms fire repelling any encircling movement.

Carnarvon had appointed Sir Bartle Frere<sup>3</sup> as High Commissioner and Commander-in-Chief in 1877, but he was on a much looser reign under Carnarvon's successor, Sir Michael Hicks Beach. The Boer Transvaal, to the north of Zululand, had effectively been mismanaged into bankruptcy,

<sup>1</sup>Henry, the 4th Earl of Carnarvon, 1831–90; Secretary of State for the Colonies, 1874–78. It is now usual to spell his name Caernarvon or Caernarfon in deference to Welsh sensitivities; the form in the main text was that in use at the time.

<sup>2</sup>A modern analysis and historical summary of the Zulu army is Ian Knight's *Anatomy of the Zulu Army* (London, 1999). He also presents an analysis of the main aspects of Zulu culture. John Lambard and Paul Thompson, *The Zulu War* (Pietermaritzberg, 2000), is the best guide yet to the battles and battlefields, and Ian Knight and Ian Castle's monograph, *Rorke's Drift* (Barnsley, 2000), is a suitable corrective in detail to the image of this action presented by the popular film *Zulu*.

<sup>3</sup>Sir Henry Bartle Edward Frere, 1815–84. As a colonial administrator his record in India and South Africa is not universally admired. He was recalled from South Africa in 1880. His one great success there is not usually noted, but should, in fairness, be remembered: he got the Sultan of Zanzibar to sign a treaty suppressing the slave trade in his domain, which gave international legitimacy to the Royal Navy's suppression of the trade in East Africa.

and the British colonies were not much better. Frere succeeded in amalgamating these various interests by force, rather than the diplomacy Carnarvon had intended. His actions included the more peaceful African tribes. He then saw the Zulus as the last remaining obstacle to complete success. The Boers in neighbouring Transvaal feared the Zulus, and found co-existence with them as a separate nation unthinkable unless there was a heavily defended border. This was quite impractical using the affordable forces, and would have been seen by the Zulus as an act of aggression.

By 1879 the Zulu kingdom was increasingly under pressure from the mineral-seeking British in neighbouring Natal to the south, who were interested in gold and diamonds. The Zulu tradition of *ibuthu*<sup>1</sup> demanded that the young men serve their king, and did not offer their services elsewhere, and this was in conflict with the British need to recruit the same young men as labourers for their mining endeavours. The resulting tension made the Zulus less amenable to negotiations.

The current Zulu king was Cetshawayo kaMpande, usually known as just Cetshawayo. There had been incursions into Zulu lands, but he was ready to negotiate. After the war, in 1881, he made a statement during peace settlement negotiations:

Mpande did you no wrong, and I have done you no wrong, therefore you must have some other object in view in invading my land.

This seems to have been his attitude throughout, and it is apparent that he was always going to resent and oppose any significant intrusion. The Lieutenant Governor of Natal, Sir Henry Bulwer,<sup>2</sup> took Cetshawayo seriously, as he feared the consequences to Natal of any war with the Zulus. He agreed a boundary commission with Cetshawayo, and this met at the commissariat at Rorke's Drift. The commission accepted the Zulu claims, and had it been left at that, there would have been no war. However, Frere suppressed the report of the commission as it would have inflamed the Boers in Transvaal where blacks were regarded as an obstacle to civilisation, and where support by the British for an adjacent black kingdom would be seen as a threat that the British would not protect them. Bulwer's attempt at peace was therefore brushed aside.

Instead pressure was put on the Zulus to disband their army, supposedly as a sign of good faith, but in reality to avoid having to station British

<sup>1</sup>A concept that resembles conscription, where every able-bodied youth had to serve in whatever capacity the king required, primarily military training and warfare, but also involving collecting cattle and other assets as a form of taxation, and policing duties. It therefore was both a defence force and a force for internal order.

<sup>2</sup>Henry Ernest Bulwer, a close relative of the Earls of Lytton. Assumed this post 3 September 1875; promoted to Governor, 6 March 1885.

troops along the border.<sup>1</sup> Cetshawayo refused to accede to this pressure, and mobilised his army. Cetshawayo later acknowledged that he knew that war with the British would end in defeat, but stated he was not prepared to let them walk into his country. On 11 January 1879, the British invaded Zululand.

However, Frere and his men had grossly underestimated the Zulus. It took eight months' hard fighting, and far more military personnel than Frere allocated to the task to subdue them. Moreover, war had not been intended in Whitehall, where there was greater respect for the Zulu culture and Frere's policy was not approved.

Lord Chelmsford led the invading army which consisted of about 18,000 men; many were African auxiliaries, and, apart from about 6,000 British regular forces, the remainder were a mixed bunch. The under-estimation of the Zulus was to lead to defeat and annihilation. Chelmsford moved out from the British encampment at Isandlwana to try and find the Zulus, leaving behind a force of 67 officers and 1,707 men, half of the latter being black. However, this remaining force was poorly disposed with no effective defence, and the Zulus attacked on 22 January 1879, overrunning the British position before they could form up. The defenders were almost wiped out, with only a handful escaping into the bush.<sup>2</sup> This defeat made it clear to the British they were up against a substantial enemy.

The next Zulu attack was made at Rorke's Drift commissariat by a separate Impi. It was defeated by a small, brilliantly led, defensive force<sup>3</sup> which had received news of Isandlwana and prepared their position. A Zulu attack on the other side of the country at Ekowe (Eshowe or Etshowe) by two further Impis failed to capture the fort there, and turned into a prolonged siege.

This was the point at which the Naval Brigade was re-organised and greatly expanded. Hitherto it had been just a contingent from HMS *Active*. It contributed to the decisive battle of Gingindlovu, where the Zulus

<sup>1</sup>The Foreign Office was getting nervous, as it had already committed many troops to an Afghan invasion, and a shortage loomed.

<sup>2</sup>There is no mention of a naval detachment in the order of battle for this force, but there is a reliable account that a naval signalman, William Aynsley from HMS *Active*, was involved, and fought strongly, armed with a cutlass and with his back to a wagon wheel, until he was stabbed through the spokes of the wheel by a Zulu who had crawled underneath.

<sup>3</sup>The defending force was eight officers and 131 men (including 35 sick) of the 2nd battalion, 24th Warwickshires, falling under the command of Lt J. R. M. Chard, RE. Chard used his engineering knowledge to fortify the commissariat in depth, although it was no bigger than a large suburban back garden, mainly using bags of mealie to throw up a parapet along a three-foot high cliff at the edge of the local river flood plain, and building an internal redoubt of packing cases and a final small keep of mealie bags within the redoubt.

suffered a resounding defeat forcing them to raise the siege of Ekowe. The *Active* contingent ultimately consisted of 174 sailors, 42 marines and 14 West African Kroomen, under Rear Admiral Francis William Sullivan<sup>1</sup> and 12 officers accompanied by their Gatling gun, two 12-pounders and two rocket tubes. They erected and fortified Fort Pearson on the Tugela river, which acted as a protected base for the other army and navy contingents as they arrived in Zululand. Next to arrive were the men of HMS *Tenedos*,<sup>2</sup> on 1 January 1879. She landed three officers and 58 men under Lieutenant Anthony Kingscote; they constructed Fort Tenedos on the Zulu side of the Tugela river. A contingent from HMS *Boadicea*<sup>3</sup> should have been next but, as Henry Eason recounts, she had smallpox aboard and had to postpone a landing until after that from HMS *Shah*. *Shah*'s captain, Richard Bradshaw, landed 16 officers and 378 men under Commander John William Brackenbury on 7 March 1879, also with the ship's Gatling gun and two rocket tubes. The *Boadicea* contingent, comprising ten officers and 218 men under Commander Francis Romilly, caught up later.

The British victory at Gingindlovu was not solely a naval achievement, but there is little doubt that this large Naval Brigade made the outcome certain and achieved the relief of Ekowe. There was widespread comment about the steadiness of the naval contingents, which was welcomed by the army command as some troops had become nervous after Isandlwana. The war was to go on for a further six months, but after Gingindlovu the Zulu position was beyond recovery. Cetshawayo was eventually exiled to Great Britain and the Zulu kingdom absorbed into Natal. However, the Zulus had forced Britain to recognise their fighting spirit and loyalty to their lands, and they have been respected ever since. After the war the Boers tried to encroach on Zululand, but were prevented from doing so by the amalgamation with Natal in 1887, which provided the Zulus with protection from the Boers thereafter.

Henry Eason's account of the proceedings of the Naval Brigade began in the New Year of 1879 when *Shah* was on passage up the Atlantic on her way home.

*St Helena, Sunday, 4 February 1879*

A French line-of-battle ship, *Loire*, was at anchor having [on board] a great number of people from a convict settlement, New Caledonia. While

<sup>1</sup>Sullivan was awarded the KCB for his part in the campaign, 27 November 1879.

<sup>2</sup>*Tenedos*, wooden training sloop 1,275 tons 1870; two 7-inch BLRs; re-rated corvette, 1875; sold 1887.

<sup>3</sup>*Boadicea*, iron steam corvette, 4,140 tons, fourteen 7-inch BLRs, 1875; sold 1905.

I was on shore the mail steamer arrived from the Cape of Good Hope and, I am sorry to say, brought some very bad news from the seat of war; it appears the Zulus attacked six companies of our troops in overwhelming numbers and destroyed them very nearly to a man. It has put this place in a great uproar, as all the men killed are well known here, they having left only a short time ago. But now comes the worst part of all as regards the *Shah*. They have sent in all directions for troops and by all appearances we are to take them to the Cape. Most likely they will also avail themselves of the Naval Brigade we could send from this ship. It will be a very bitter disappointment for our dear friends. Just when they are looking out for our arrival they will get the news that we are sent back to the Cape. Let us hope that whatever we may have to do in this work that it will please God to spare us.

*St Helena, Saturday, 10 February 1879*

I ate a little fish for my breakfast, but it must have been exposed to the moon for it poisoned me,<sup>1</sup> and I came out very red. It was all gone by dinner time, but I am still in the sick list.

*St Helena, Tuesday, 13 February 1879*

At 5.45 p.m. the anchor was weighed and we steamed slowly between the shipping and the shore. The rigging was manned and three cheers were given in English style. The few troops who were left on shore returned it heartily. The merchant shipping cheered us and the men went aloft twice more to return it. It was very amusing to see the state some of the 88th<sup>2</sup> came on board in. Some were without their spiked helmets; some had had the sleeves of their tunics pulled off; and others were covered in mud and dirt where they had been down in the road.

Everybody seems to think the ship's company will land. We have orders to make duck leggings ready. I know my poor little wife will be very much put out when she hears that we are gone back instead of coming home, but she would be much more so if she thought for one moment there was a chance of our landing to fight the Zulus. I hope and trust that she will not know anything about it until it is finished and I am safe back to the ship again. If we have to land we must trust to God

<sup>1</sup>This is an old superstition, that if fish is exposed to the moon it becomes poisonous. Probably it was a disguised warning not to keep fish overnight, as it might go bad – a sensible precaution in the tropics in the days before refrigeration.

<sup>2</sup>The 88th were the Irish Connaught Rangers. After landing they built and manned a small fort at Stanger and another defending the road north from Fort Pearson.

to bring us safely through it all as He did before with the *Huascar*, and then I hope we will be able to return to our dear ones at home, who I am sure will be waiting with open arms to receive us. All our men are in good spirits and, I must say, good health. If we can keep that up we shall do very well. The only thing that troubles us is, we can't get any letters.

*Simon's Bay, Monday, 24 February 1879*

We arrived here in Simon's Bay yesterday at 3-30 pm under steam. It blew very hard, and so it have ever since. We found the *Tenedos* here flying the senior officer's pendant, the *Industry*<sup>1</sup> upon the slip, the *Flora*<sup>2</sup> in quarantine. It appears that the *Boadicea* arrived recently as the new flag ship of the station with Commander Richards on board. I hear she called at Sierra Leone for crew men<sup>3</sup> and they took the smallpox on board her. When she arrived here it was very bad. She put all her cases on board *Flora*, Commander Romelly being one of them, and left for some bay immediately after. The captain signalled to the senior officer at Natal, offering the service of the ship's company. He received the reply today accepting it and ordering us to proceed with all dispatch to Natal. We have not heard any news that we can rely on about the war, only that our people are acting on the defensive at present, and that the naval brigade is furthest to the front doing very good service. Let us hope that we do the same when we get there, and that it will soon be finished, if it pleases God without any further loss to our country.

*Thursday, 27 February 1879*

Still coaling ship, and loading up with stores and provisions; we are taking in everything they can spare from the dockyard. It is now rumoured that all the seamen and marines that are here belonging to the *Flora* and dockyard are to go in our ship to the front. We have received orders from the front to proceed as soon as possible to the relief of Colonel Pearson,<sup>4</sup> who has charge of the *Active*'s party. I have been on shore every day these

<sup>1</sup>*Industry*, iron store ship, 1,100 tons, 1854; sold 1911.

<sup>2</sup>*Griper*, renamed *Flora*, iron steam gunboat, 265 tons, one 10-inch MLR, 1879; harbour service 1905 as YC373; renamed *Flora* 1923 as base ship; renamed *Afrikander* 1933; sold c.1937. Since the deployment of the East India Company's *Nemesis* in the First Opium War, the superior ability of iron steam gunboats to penetrate up rivers had been recognised. It could be that she was being deployed in this role, possibly hunting slavers in the estuaries of the East African coast.

<sup>3</sup>A homophone for Kroomen.

<sup>4</sup>Col. C. K. Pearson, commanding officer, No.1 Column.

three days about the canteen; got it all on board this afternoon.<sup>1</sup> The wind went down on Monday night, Tuesday was very fine, Wednesday it rained all day, but they kept all hands at work just the same; it has been pretty fine all day today. While on shore in the dockyard I met an old friend and towny of mine, J. Edwards of Weymouth; he belongs to the *Flora*. The last I saw of him he was in the *Seaflower* brig<sup>2</sup> at St. Vincent. We have not sent the troops on shore, they are going on with us to Natal and no doubt they will go right on to the front with us. I am very glad to think that my dear wife do not know that we are about to land to fight for our country, or she would be very uneasy, I know. God bless her, I hope she is well.

*Sunday, 2 March 1879*

We left Simon's Bay yesterday afternoon about 2-30, with as heavy a cargo as ever the *Shah* had on board her. I think more coals than ever was stowed below before was put on board this time. Casks of provisions are stowed all round the upper deck. We are expecting to arrive at Natal Tuesday night or Wednesday morning if the wind does not come strongly against us; at present we have a nice breeze in our favour with all plain sail set and we are rattling along about 11 knots. We are expecting by next week this time to be on the way to the relief of our comrades or brother blue jackets who are hemmed in by the enemy at Ekowe. Great preparations are being made on board here. Last night soda water bottles<sup>3</sup> were served out to all the landing party with a piece of Fearnot<sup>4</sup> to cover them, and today notwithstanding it being Sunday, all the sail makers were at work making the tents for our men, and 29 blue jackets are making canvas leggings as fast as possible for all that land. We had no cheering at Simon's Bay when we left, as we did at St. Helena. A few ladies was on board before leaving. The band played while they were here, and when we proceeded Captain Baldwin of the 88th sent his wife, children and servant on shore at Simon's Town. The *Tenedos* signalled us 'May success

<sup>1</sup>Eason was trusted with the task of doing the ship's shopping from time to time.

<sup>2</sup>*Seaflower*, training brig, 454 tons, eight 6-pounders, 1873; renamed *Workshop* 1, 1904; sold 1908.

<sup>3</sup>These were the first form of carbonated drinks available as an inexpensive item of commerce. They differed in their method of closure from present bottles. A glass ball in the neck was forced up against a seat by the carbon dioxide gas pressure. The seal was broken by pushing the glass ball into the bottle. This did not demand a special opener, as it could be achieved with a stick or other handy item.

<sup>4</sup>A homophone for Fearnought. This was a very heavy woollen cloth valued as a weather-proof, and used here as a protective padding. It was non-flammable and did not produce static; it was used around magazines for this reason.

attend you'. Money was paid today, another out-of-the-way thing for Sunday – but it is wartime and I suppose they consider it necessary.

*Tuesday, 4 March 1879*

We are not at anchor tonight as I predicted we should be when I wrote last. The wind chopped right round dead against us and having a strong current against us we have not made near the progress I expected. They have issued a pair of boots gratuitously to every man that is to land. They are to give us also two pairs of socks, one waterproof sheet, one helmet and a great coat.

[The next time Eason was able to write up his diary was 14 August, 1879, on passage from Simon's Town to Spithead. He introduces his entries with a general comment, and then goes on to complete his diary in his usual style:]

... Thank God I am once more enabled to write a few lines in my log. Since my last entry I have had some trials and troubles, and been laid very low with fever; but I was spared while no less than ten of my shipmates was taken. I will endeavour to pick up my log from where I left it before we arrived in Natal, with the help of the few notes I was able to make while on shore in Zululand.

*Thursday, 6 March 1879*

Great preparations on board for landing. One pair of boots and socks were served out. All hands seem to be in high spirits, and very anxious to get to the Tugela river, where by all accounts the general intends to form a flying column consisting of the *Shah's* and *Tenedos'* naval brigade, and proceed to the relief of Ekowe.

*Friday, 7 March 1879*

The steamer came alongside this morning and took the first party away amid much cheering from the ship. I did not leave till the captain and commander went about noon. We crossed the bar dry and reached the shore in about half an hour. Admiral Sullivan (just promoted) was on the wharf to meet the brigade, and when I got on shore I had the honour of shaking hands with him. He came and took my hand and asked one how I was getting on, and wished me well. Our band took the lead and we started for Durban, a distance of about two miles and a half. All the way

along we were cheered by the people. When about half way General Lord Chelmsford met us on horse back. He shook hands with the captain and commander, then looked back over his shoulder and said 'They'll do work'. When we arrived in camp we found the tents pitched for us. The soldiers whom we brought from St. Helena were there; they met us with more than three hearty cheers. We found it very hot marching up. All the necessary camp utensils were issued, and we settled down after all the sentries were placed. In the evening we had a lark with a few Kaffers [*sic*] who danced to the great amusement of all the brigade.

*Saturday, 8 March 1879*

I must say I did not have much sleep the first night under canvas. I found it very hard indeed and not very warm. We had one blanket, one waterproof sheet, and a soldier's great coat, Some of our men had a little too much beer from the canteen, and it made them very noisy.

*Sunday, 9 March 1879*

Being Sunday we went to the town church where we heard Archdeacon Lloyd preach. He was very earnest in all his prayers, and quite overcome. I went to the church a little before the remainder, having been sent to enquire if they were quite ready for us. I met the Archdeacon at the door. He shook my hand and clapped me on the shoulder, saying 'We are delighted to see you, my brave boy. Come as many of you as possible'. Our men were very pleased with his preaching. Soon after coming out of church, I had to go down to the point and make a signal to the *Shah*, but as it could not be done satisfactorily I was obliged to go off in the steamer. It was very rough indeed; the steamer could not get alongside. I did not go aboard, but made the signal from the steamer. Yesterday we were fallen in for the general's inspection.<sup>1</sup> He had a good look at us, and then spoke a few words. During his remarks he said 'he was delighted to have such a fine body of men under his command'. After the general was finished, Captain Bradshaw addressed us. He said he was very sorry he could not accompany us to the front. The reason was that should anything happen to the general, he would be the next senior man in the field, and then he would find himself in a very awkward position. But he said if he was not there his heart would be with us. He also reminded us that we were not going on a picnic and we were not to grumble if we did not get our dinners every day at twelve o'clock, for he thought it more than likely that we

<sup>1</sup>Lt. Gen. Lord Chelmsford.

should not get any dinner at all some days. If we did not go without some times we should be very fortunate.

*Monday, 10 March 1879*

Two of our companies left for Saccharine<sup>1</sup> by the 9 am train. As we were fallen in to start for the station, the signal was hoisted that the *Tamar* was in sight with the 57th regiment from Ceylon. The captain was very pleased that we were going up country before they landed. The remainder of us left by the 12-30 train. The station was crowded with people. Captain Bradshaw was present, also Archdeacon Lloyd, who is nearly eighty years of age. On the platform we gave three cheers for the captain. As the train left the station there was a great deal of cheering, likewise all the way along the route.

When we arrived at Saccharine we found the bullock wagons waiting for us. We very soon made a start, but found the travelling slow and the road heavy, impeding the oxen, which cannot travel very fast. We made our march as cheerful as possible by singing, varied by airs from the fife and drum band.

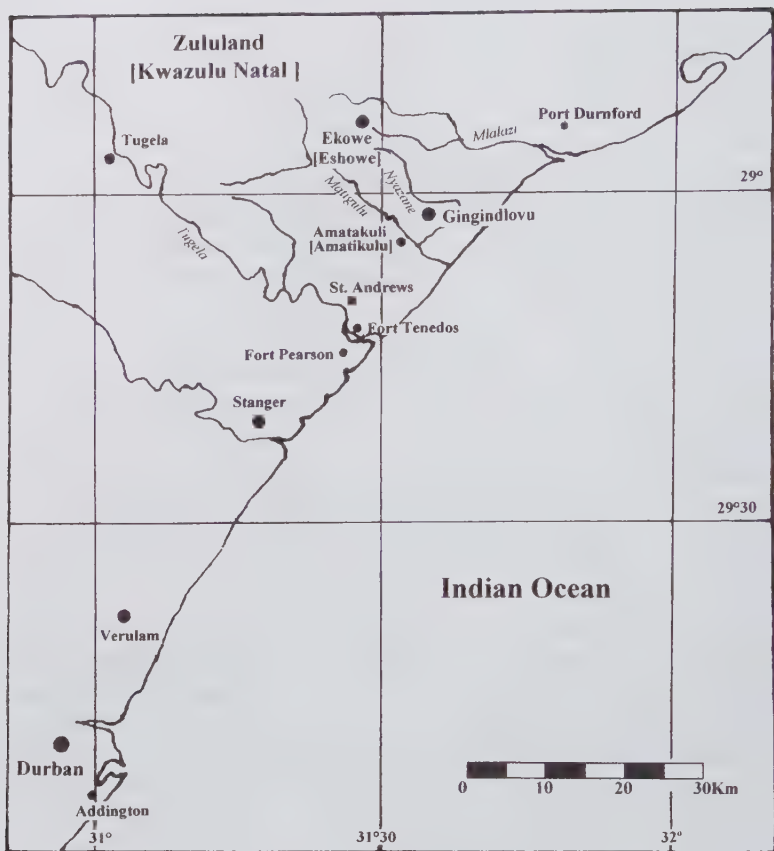
We passed through a very pretty village, Verulam, the inhabitants greeting us with cheers. Just below the village was a beautiful river, which we had to ford. A few yards the other side we encamped. After tents were pitched we went to the river and bathed. Some of the carts broke down. Our tent, bags and traps were in one of them, so that we had no place to get under cover. The carts arrived at last, so all was right once more.

*Tuesday, 11 March 1879*

Left Verulam at 6 am; had another very hot march. Pitched at a place called Victoria;<sup>2</sup> another river here, plenty of bathing and washing. We were ordered to keep inside our tents during the heat of the day. 4 am [*sic*] – made another start, but not having a proper guide we passed the place that it was proposed for us to encamp upon. We had gone about two miles the other side of it, making it all about ten miles since 4 o'clock. The commander rode along the ranks and explained what had happened, saying 'Shall we go back or on to the next camping ground?' It was decided unanimously to go on; away we went. We found it much more comfortable marching after sundown. After going about three miles we

<sup>1</sup>This name is untraceable, and Shakaskraal, which is the nearest phonetically, is too far north to fit.

<sup>2</sup>There is a Victoria in Kwazulu Natal, but it lies too far north to be this place. It could just be a farm.



# VI Map of the area traversed by the Naval Brigade in 1879

The tented hospital at Herwin has not been found, but must have been to the south of Verulam. The site originally chosen for Port Durnford was about 20 km north-east of the present one. It proved to be an unsatisfactory anchorage, and the port was then moved to the position shown.

came to an hotel, where we stopped. The commander paid for a glass of beer for every man in the brigade, which came very acceptable. I and poor Langford, who is [now] laid low in his grave, was ordered to serve the men their beer. After the battalion had their beer, we found there were several carts not yet come up, Mr Cook, gunner, being in charge of them. The commander told Langford and me to remain behind and wait for them to come up and supply all the men with a glass of beer each. The battalion

moved off, while I and Langford went inside the house and made ourselves as comfortable as possible. After remaining some time, and there being no sign of the carts coming up, we thought it possible we might get a little supper. We asked the landlord; he said certainly. They gave us bacon, cheese, bread and butter, and some beautiful hot tea. We thoroughly enjoyed our supper, for which we paid only one shilling each. At last Mr. Cook's party arrived and had their beer. We then started off for the camp where we arrived about 11-30 pm. We were supposed to have marched 20 miles that day, and we were all glad to get into the camp to rest.

*Wednesday, 12 March 1879*

Out at 6-30 am, bathed in the river. We did not expect to make another start till the afternoon, but at 8 am down came the tents and we marched another eight miles. We pitched tents the other side of a river until 4 pm, when another march was made, and at 6-30 pm we arrived at Stanger. We commenced to pitch tent when the Commander discovered that the water was bad there. He at once ordered us to move off again to a place two miles farther on. We saw the General and his staff at Stanger.

This place was garrisoned by the 88th regiment and a great number of native contingent. The new camping ground was anything but comfortable if the water was better. The camp was situated in a swamp. The rain fell very heavy, half filling our tents. We had to sleep in pools of water. My tent mates and I passed a most miserable night.

*Thursday, 13 March 1879*

Weather very fine overhead. 8-30 am on the march again, but it is frightful work getting through the mud. The roads are very bad indeed. We crossed another river and halted, finding some mounted infantry encamped. Our tents were not pitched here. We all enjoyed a nice bathe in the river, and washed clothes. At 4 pm started another march of four miles. A river separated us from a regiment of natives who were encamped on the other side. We pitched our tents on this side. The water here was very bad.

*Friday, 14 March 1879*

We had a very bad night's sleep in our tent last night, as we had a bit of a scare. The river was very close to us and said to be full of alligators. After dark we heard a sort of grunting noise which we listened to with great attention, as it seemed to be getting much closer, we felt rather

uneasy for we concluded it must be an alligator. It was so dark outside that we could not see our hands before us. Corporal Westbrook and I mustered up enough courage to go outside, taking with us a drawn cutlass and a lantern. As we advanced the sound seemed to retire. At last we were obliged to abandon our search, as the sound was gone completely beyond our reach. We returned to our tent only to be laughed at by our tent mates, who were very brave now the disagreeable sound was a long way off. But soon after we had laid down for the night our friend began to make his way towards us again and at times it was so close that we thought it was near our heads, just outside the tent. But I remained still while some of the remainder showed signs of fear. Once poor Langford jumped up, seized a cutlass and rushed outside, saying he thought he saw some large living thing close to the door, but if so it soon went, for he saw nothing when outside. The noise seemed to die away. He came in, laid down, and told us what he thought he saw. It soon came back again, but we were all determined not to be made fools of any more. Still the sound continued, and although none of us ventured out again to discover the whereabouts of this nuisance, we did not sleep much but remained on the alert all night. We were safe and sound in the morning, but imagine our disgust after relating the facts to a person acquainted with the country, we discovered that it was nothing but a horrid bullfrog that disturbed our rest. We took no more notice of sounds like these afterwards, although toads often croaked in our hearing, as if they wished to remind us of the scare. We made another start about 8-30 am, arrived at Fort Pearson at about 11 am. This is a small fort on the top of a hill this side of the Tugela river, commanding the drift. We were taken across the river in detachments by the pontoon worked by the men of HMS *Tenedos*. There is [a] little fort compactly built and very formidable built on the Zulu side of the river named after the *Tenedos*. I should think a few men could hold it against a great number of Zulus. We encamped a little distance in front of this fort, the inside of the fort being kept for the sick only, of which there were a very large number. The *Tenedos* men gave us some hearty cheers on our arrival. Seventy rounds of ammunition were issued to each man, and we were ordered to sleep with our belts on and our arms by our side in case of a surprise, as we were now in the enemy's country. The commander, in consideration of our arriving in Zululand, looked over the few offences that were committed by one or two of our men while in the camp at Durban – crime – having taken too much beer. We were all very pleased, as it gave everyone the opportunity to commence with no crime against him.

*Saturday, 15 March 1879*

We have had a day off today. This evening we threw up a trench one side of the camp. I have been across the river to Fort Pearson with a telegram for the admiral. Two companies of the Buffs,<sup>1</sup> Browne's Horse<sup>2</sup> and some natives proceeded to St. Andrew's mission house to form a depot; it is about eight miles distant. A party of officers went there today to signal to Colonel Pearson at Ekowe. Messages were sent, but they could not get any reply.

*Sunday, 16 March 1879*

I went to Fort Pearson again this morning with another telegram. When I returned I was ordered to procure an horse and to accompany Commander Brackenbury to St. Andrews to try and get some signals to and from Ekowe.<sup>3</sup> We used a bedroom looking glass to make the signals with, and I am glad to say we were more than successful. After we had asked some questions they reported 'They were on short rations. They would last them till the 4th April. They had plenty of meat in the track oxen.' I suspect they find it rather tough. They also reported the death of Captain Williams on the 13th instant. We then returned to camp, my horse going much better when homeward than outward bound. It was the property of Dr. Sibbald. I enjoyed my trip very much indeed and was very pleased we got their signals.

*Monday, 17 March 1879*

Our marines (We left them at Durban) and twenty men of the Royal Artillery arrived at noon. The marines encamped with us, the artillery the other side of the river. We were all very pleased to receive two native messengers that came in this afternoon from Ekowe with dispatches from Colonel Pearson. Rumour says that Pearson reports twenty five thousand Zulu between here and Ekowe.

*Tuesday, 18 March 1879*

We had a very rough night last night. It rained and blew very hard, so much so that at times we thought the tent would come down upon us. A

<sup>1</sup>3rd Regiment, East Kents.

<sup>2</sup>This was probably an irregular force.

<sup>3</sup>Although Eason makes little of it, he and Cdr John William Brackenbury now travelled deep into enemy territory to make contact with Ekowe. The exchange of signals enabled evacuation to be carried out under proper control. Brackenbury got the CMG for this, 19 December 1879, and Eason got the Ekowe clasp to his campaign medal.

very vigilant watch was kept, in case the enemy would take advantage of the bad weather and attack us. Guns and rocket tubes were placed in position inside the trench. Today our Gatling gun<sup>1</sup> and crew was sent to reinforce the garrison at St. Andrews. The General has abandoned the idea of trying to relieve Ekowe with a small force. We hear that the *Boadicea*'s brigade is on the way to join us, and will be here tomorrow.

*Wednesday, 19 March 1879*

This morning, before breakfast two companies of our men went out skirmishing for drill. Orders were received today to be ready to start with a flying column for the relief of Ekowe on the 28th instant. It is arranged for our brigade to form the rear part of the column. No tents and only provisions for four days are to be taken. I hope it will be a successful undertaking.

*Thursday, 20 March 1879*

A little more drill before breakfast this morning. The wire across the river carried away today, causing all work with the pontoon to be stopped. We hear there is a little alteration in the order of march; our brigade forms the advance and not the rear guard on our leaving for Ekowe.

*Friday, 21 March 1879*

News came into camp today to the effect that a company of the 80th regiment<sup>2</sup> had been surprised while on convoy. About sixty either killed or missing. We have not the full particulars, but it makes us all eager to get amongst them and try to wipe it out. I don't think they will attack this position, as they fancy we are too strong for them here.

*Saturday, 22 March 1879*

The 57th regiment arrived the other side of the river this morning. The pontoon wire having stranded again, she was unable to bring them across. I had a note from my friend Wells today. Very bad weather last night and showery all day today. Camp life here is not so bad – plenty to eat and drink – the only drawback being the cooking arrangements, which in wet weather is very difficult indeed.

<sup>1</sup>The Gatling gun was the first form of machine gun to see service in the Royal Navy. Often mounted in the fighting top, its primary use was to repel boarders.

<sup>2</sup>The Staffordshire Volunteers.

*Sunday, 23 March 1879*

There has been nothing taking place here to make it seem like a Sunday, but rather the reverse. The pontoon again being in working order, she brought the 57th across. They encamped on our left. The general, Commodore Richards, and staff arrived. They inspected all the positions, including St. Andrews. While they were in our camp the alert was sounded. The tents were all struck and the men all armed and in the trenches in a very short space of time. None of the men had their belts on and they were all over the camp, some sleeping and others cooking. The general was very much pleased. We had several alterations made in the mode of resistance and attack. We are not to retire to the fort as previously arranged, but form a square and defend the camp against anything.

*Monday, 24 March 1879*

The whole of our marines were sent to reinforce St. Andrew's. Sherlock, one of my signal men, was sent also. We shall now be able to communicate with them from Fort Pearson. The Gatling Gun and crew returned from St. Andrew's. This morning I made a little experiment with a small looking glass, and was able to make signals to Fort Pearson very plainly.

*Tuesday, 25 March 1879*

Early this morning the 91st regiment<sup>1</sup> made their appearance and soon after the *Boadicea's* brigade hove in sight. The pontoon has been working hard all day bringing them over. It was late this evening before the *Boadiceas* were all across. Each company of the 91st was accompanied by a piper in kilts who caused much excitement among the natives. Our fife and drum band met the *Boadicea's* men at the drift and piped them up to the camp. There are about 230 of them. They are encamped close to us at present. They are commanded by Lieutenant Carr, the whole Naval Brigade being under the command of Commander Brackenbury of the *Shah*.

*Wednesday, 26 March 1879*

The river has been very low, causing much delay in bringing heavy gear across. The pontoon often grounds, stopping all traffic. The wagons and carts are being put in position ready for the march. This evening all the

<sup>1</sup>Princess Louise's Argyllshire Highlanders.

forces were paraded for the general's inspection. He impressed upon us to be steady when under fire and not throw away our ammunition by firing at too long ranges. He also said he was very pleased to have such a fine body of men placed at his disposal.

*Thursday, 27 March 1879*

We were to have struck tents this morning, but we have had a flashing signal cancelling the order. The 3rd/60th rifle regiment<sup>1</sup> has arrived. They complete the force that is to form the relief column. River still very low. The 99th regiment<sup>2</sup> came across the river today. Our men have been employed by companies dragging heavy wagons across the river. The natives, horses and cattle have had to come through the water today. The provision wagons for Ekowe are here ready. It is not quite certain we move tomorrow. We have had bad news from the ship today; Perkins, one of the carpenter's crew, being nearly crushed to death while at work on shore at Natal, the pile driver having fallen upon him.

*Friday, 28 March 1879*

This morning all our men were served with a large felt hat and puggarees.<sup>3</sup> I think they will be much more suitable than our white navy hats for this work. At noon we struck our tents and stowed them away in others pitched for the purpose. We take nothing with us but a blanket, a waterproof sheet and our arms. Only biscuits, tea, and a little rum is to be taken in the way of provisions. The tea will not be very nice without sugar, but it is wartime and we must expect to be pinched a little. Although we have struck tent, we do not make a move till tomorrow morning.

*Saturday, 29 March 1879*

The weather last night was something dreadful – I think the worst we have had since we landed. The rain came down in torrents, and there was no place for us to go for shelter. The commander and Colonel Law dined together in the open air, the rain nearly washing the things away. Our men were very cheerful under the trying circumstances. Singing was kept up

<sup>1</sup>3rd Company, The King's Royal Rifle Corps.

<sup>2</sup>Duke of Edinburgh Lanarkshire Regiment.

<sup>3</sup>A puggaree was originally a variety of turban, but about 1860 the name was transferred to a piece of cloth worn with a tropical helmet. It protected the back of the neck from the sun. This prevented sunburn, but it is doubtful whether it achieved its objective of preventing heat stroke, whose causes were not understood at the time.

till a very late hour. All sorts of plans were tried to make a little shelter. Some could be seen curled up in empty water casks, others had their blankets stretched on sticks while laid down in the open air with only their waterproof sheets under and blankets over them. Some of us had a little sleep nevertheless. We marched at 5 am, the 91st regiment leading. The *Shah's* and *Tenedos'* men followed with our Gatling Gun, two nine pounders and two rocket tubes. The *Boadicea's* men were attached to the rear part of the column under the command of Colonel Pemberton of the 3rd/60th rifles. We were under the command of Colonel Law, Royal Artillery, and General Lord Chelmsford commanding the whole force. Commodore Richards of *Boadicea* accompanied the column but took no command. The roads were very bad indeed, making it very hard work for the oxen. We passed a number of the 91st men who were obliged to fall out. It was very hot indeed. Our great coats were wet through, as well as the remainder of our clothing. We found it very heavy to carry. We are now encamped by the side of a small river. Since we have been bivouacked two young bucks have been startled; a crowd soon gave chase. One of the native contingent succeeded in asagaing one of them. We have since formed a laager with the wagons and dug a trench round it. The general personally superintended the placing of wagons in laager. This evening we have had a half gill of rum, served to each man.

*Sunday, 30 March 1879*

Had a little rain during the night. We slept outside the laager, near the trenches, every man close to his post where he would have to fight should the enemy appear. The *Shahs* manned the two corners of the front face, Gatling in one and the nine pounder in the other corner, *Boadiceas* and the *Tenedos'* men in the other two. This morning nine of the 91st regiment and the *Shahs* crossed the river and waited a long time till the remainder got across. From this point we could see Ekowe on top of a high hill on our left front. It did not look very far off, but the round about way we had to go made the distance great. The Commander read the prayers; it reminded us that the day was Sunday. About 4 pm we encamped by the side of the river Amatakuli. Here we were enabled to bathe for the first time since leaving the Tugela. No sign yet of any Zulus. We passed several kraals which our scouts very soon fired. We have formed a laager as before. A rumour went round this evening that a spy was taken. They had a black under the sentry's charge, but he did not look to me much like a spy. It transpired that he had come up from the Tugela with us as a servant to some one in the column. The poor fellow was very much frightened by the men around him who made him

understand that he was to be shot. When I went to have a look at him I saw a soldier with a shovel making motions and signs that he was going to dig his grave. Every one seemed ready to condemn the poor fellow without a trial, for they nearly all said 'Shoot him, he's a Zulu'. We halted twice today besides mealie<sup>1</sup> fields. Colonel Law told us to take what we wanted. They are not bad food in the absence of anything better. It is said they are good for the stomach. The weather has been exceedingly fine, temperature about 70°.

*Monday, 31 March 1879*

We crossed the river [Nyazane] at about 8-30 am and halted on the other side while the wagons and the rear guard came across. It took a long time. The river is deep and it is a tedious job. We had to carry all our things on our rifle over our shoulders to keep them dry. We were not permitted to take any of our clothing off, not even our boots and socks. It was a fine sight to see the men cross the river, especially the Naval Brigade. The water ran very swiftly, and anything that was dropped on the way across was soon a long way down the river. Zulus were reported last night to be advancing towards us in two large bodies, but they have not yet come in sight of the column. It has taken the oxen so long to cross the river with the wagons that the general has decided to make only a short march. We are now laagered about two miles from the river. The general impression is that we shall have a brush with the enemy tomorrow. I saw another splendid buck today. There seems to be a great number of them in this country. I killed a good sized puff adder today with my sword. They are the most venomous snake in the country.

*Tuesday, 1 April 1879*

Another night passed without the sign of an engagement. The order of march was reversed today, the 91st regiment, the Buffs and the *Shahs* forming the rear instead of the advance guard. It was a long time before we could move, as the wagons took so long to get on the move. We are now halted, what for I do not know. The head of the column is out of sight over the hills. The enemy has been seen in bodies on our left flank, but no shots have been exchanged yet. Our train was very long and straggling today. I should think it covered between three and four miles. All hands are saying 'Why don't they come out and fight us in the open?' We have

<sup>1</sup>A form of maize, grown in quantity in the area, and commonly used by the army for fodder for the horses and oxen.

the advantage in the open, they have it in the bush, and no doubt they will stay there as long as they can.

*Wednesday, 2 April 1879*

Since my last note we have had an attack,<sup>1</sup> and thank God I have come through without a scratch. We came in and formed up the laager yesterday afternoon. We heard at the same time that the Zulus were very close to us; consequently a very sharp look-out was kept. We had not been in long before a very heavy thunderstorm came on. The rain came down so heavily that it washed all the camp fires out and filled our trenches; in fact, I never saw such rain; the laager was like a river. Fortunately, it did not last long, and the night overhead was fine, but the mud under foot was something dreadful. After the cattle had all been driven into the laager it was more like a cow yard than anything else. The alarm was sounded about 7 pm; the trenches were manned in the very quick of time. The order was given to load, and we really thought we were going to have some fighting, more especially as all the outpost came in. Some of the native contingent had a narrow escape of being fired upon by our men, being mistaken for Zulus. However, only one shot was fired, and that by accident by one of the mounted men. The night passed off quietly, and I had a good night's rest on the soft mud. Soon after daybreak our scouts came in and reported Zulus advancing upon us in great numbers. In a very short time they were in sight from the laager, and seemed to appear as if by magic. They came from the direction of Ekowe. When they came within a convenient distance they opened out in the shape of a horse shoe, encircling the laager with the two horns. They manoeuvred very quickly. The opposite face to us opened fire upon them first. There was a bluff or hill in front of us, where a number of them took shelter from our fire, but as soon as they showed themselves clear they were met by a tremendous fire from our Gatling gun, C and D companies, Walsh's rockets, and the 57th regiment.<sup>2</sup> I should think it impossible for anything to stand against the deadly fire that was poured from our trenches. The sun rising over the hill right in front of us made it bad for our sight, and the smoke soon became so dense we could not see anything, but when it lifted and the Zulus could be seen, they fell very fast. The Zulus seemed to fire very high, as we could hear the shots whining overhead. The first I saw fall was a splendid horse close behind me, the next a poor fellow of the 91st over on our right who never spoke after being shot. The fight was

<sup>1</sup>The Battle of Gingindlovu.

<sup>2</sup>West Middlesex Regiment.

continuous for about an hour and a half, when the mounted men were sent out in chase of the retreating Zulus. The native contingent were also sent out, and a good running fire kept up by them bringing many a Zulu to the ground, but not without a little loss to themselves. It was rather annoying – they would not allow any of us to go out of the laager in pursuit. They could be seen going over the hills in great numbers. I must say the Zulus are a very brave race of people; perhaps it is not bravery but ignorance. They came within thirty yards of our trenches against a tremendous fire. After it was over we went outside and saw the dead. The sight I witnessed I shall never forget. They were laying about in all directions, and some of them not quite dead. One of our marines had a narrow escape of being assagied by one who lay as if dead, and then made a jump up, but a bullet from the marine's rifle prevented him from again trying to kill anyone. Two wounded prisoners were brought into the laager. The native contingent were very pleased to have an opportunity of finishing some of the wounded. It is supposed fifteen to twenty thousand Zulus attacked us. The estimated number of Zulus killed was twelve hundred.<sup>1</sup> Seven of the Naval brigade were wounded, including one officer, Dr. Longfield of the *Tenedos*. Two only of the *Shahs* were struck, Bulger AB wounded in the arm, and Bird AB wounded in the arm and both breasts. This afternoon the alarm was sounded. We thought we were going to have another rub with them but they did not come anywhere near us. Eight Zulu prisoners have been brought in more or less wounded. The mounted men report dead Zulus laying for miles off, where they must have crawled and died. A good deal of signalling between us and Ekowe this afternoon. I was assisting when the last alarm was sounded. The general has decided to give up Ekowe. He intends sending one half of the force up with a little provisions tomorrow morning and bringing Colonel Pearson and all his troops out, destroying the place. They say this place is to be made a permanent camp instead of Ekowe, as there is not as much brush here. It is now 5-30 pm. No dinner yet. We are to have fresh beef when we can get it. A tot [ $\frac{1}{2}$  gill] of rum was issued last night on account of the wet.

*Thursday, 3 April 1879*

Fine weather last night, and grog issued, perhaps in consideration for the fight. This morning just before four o'clock shots were heard at a distance. The trenches were very quickly manned, but after remaining there for two hours we were dismissed and fires were lit for making a little tea (without

<sup>1</sup>Modern estimates agree with this, but the actual counted dead was 470 near the laager, and about a further 200 within a short distance. Many Zulus died of their wounds further away, but were never counted.

any sugar). About 9 am the general left here with about two thirds of the force for Ekowe. Soon after they had gone the signal was made from Ekowe that we were to send four hundred oxen up, or they would have to destroy upwards of thirty wagons. A messenger was dispatched on horse back to overtake the general and report the signal. In the meantime oxen were driven in, and four hundred of them sent off with only the drivers and a few mounted men to escort them. The messenger returned with orders to send them as quickly as possible, but they were then a long way on the road. I have learned the casualties on our side – one officer and four men killed, twenty five officers and men wounded, some of them very dangerously. Four hundred and seventy Zulus were buried, who were found a short distance from the trenches. There were four of the native contingent killed, and eleven wounded. Our two wounded men are doing well. Bird's case is far the worse of the two; the shot passed through his arm and then laid open his breast. Bulger was shot in the arm while his rifle was at the shoulder. One or two people had very narrow escapes. One officer had a shot pass through his helmet ... Since the last entry I have had to run. When the alarm sounded I was anything but ready, being at the signal point with my belts and accoutrements off. I gathered up all my gear and got inside as quickly as possible, and I am now in a wagon with bags of meal stacked up breast high in front and on both sides of us as a barricade with sufficient room inside for about six of us to fire from. This new form of fortifying ourselves is caused by our number being reduced by the Ekowe party going. The earth has been thrown up close to the wagons, and if attacked we shall have to fight from under the wagons. The laager looks very formidable, and I think, notwithstanding our reduced forces, we could hold it against any number of Zulus that like to come. I feel quite secure in my little fort. The alarm was sounded to get the men in their positions and for them to make shelters for themselves with the material that was at hand.

· To continue my notes from where I was before the alarm – two of our men had their swords hit by a bullet. A soldier's rifle that I saw had a shot hole in the stock. I could see the column advancing up the hills this evening. I don't think they have met with any resistance yet, and my opinion is they will go right through without a shot being exchanged. I hope they will. I saw also that the cattle that were sent overtook the column. We have given Ekowe all the news today by signal. They congratulated us yesterday after the fight was over. They witnessed the battle from the hills of Ekowe. They told us that Lieutenant Evelyn died on the 29th. They seem to have lost a large number since they have been there. Another Zulu prisoner was brought in this evening. One of the Buffs who was wounded yesterday died during the night. He had a brother in

the same corps who followed him to the grave; two Zulu prisoners have died of their wounds.

*Friday, 4 April 1879*

Fine night. The alert was sounded this morning about 3 o'clock, but nothing took place. One more prisoner brought in. They are still finding dead Zulus in the bush and long grass. They seem to think that fifteen hundred is near the number of Zulus killed. We have not yet found out if the column got to Ekowe all right last night. It is very cloudy at present. We can not signal to them as there is no sun. The name of this place in Gingiulhovo [*sic*]. This evening several – one wounded – Zulus were brought in; some are cut and pierced with shots frightfully. One of them can speak English very well. He has been to England, Bombay, China, and many other places in an English merchant ship. The native contingent has brought in a great number of rifles and reports a great number of dead Zulus laying about. No signs yet of the column from Ekowe. I don't think they have started yet or we would have seen them coming down the hills. We have no information of their arrival there yet, but I could see a great number of people and cattle moving about Ekowe today. I conclude they must have got in. We have not been able to signal, having no sun. We had a little rain today, now it is cleared up. I hope it will continue so for the sake of our comrades on the march.

*Saturday, 5 April 1879*

A very fine night and no Alarm, in face of the many rumours that went the rounds of the camp last night. It was said that, from information received from one of the prisoners, that we would be attacked at 4 o'clock this morning. Another prisoner was brought in this morning, supposed to be a spy. He is not wounded. He carried a rifle and assaigais.

At daylight we could see some troops in laager this side of Ekowe. We saw fires there last night, and I was called up as they thought they were flashing, but they were their camp fires. At 9-30 am we could see the head of the column moving down the hill. They appear to be very straggly, the rear not yet having started. They say we are to build a fort close [to] here, and it is expected that some of us will have to remain behind to garrison it till the whole of the troops come up. It is a beautiful moonlight night, and I am enabled to write by the light of the moon. I have found out the reason why the column looked so straggling today. We saw the head of the column come down and pass on towards the Tugela about four miles to our left. We could not understand it at first, especially as part of the

column was a long way in the rear. But now we find the first part of what we thought was the column was Colonel Pearson's brigade and they went straight on to Tugela without coming here. The general and the relief column is in laager about half way and intend coming on tomorrow. Many more arms were brought in today, among them many Martini Henry rifles<sup>1</sup> which did belong to the 2/24th regiment.<sup>2</sup> The majority of the arms are marked Tower 1875, and are not breech loaders.<sup>3</sup> A few of the mounted infantry came in tonight from the general's laager. They say the Zulus are anxious to give up the game, but we cannot put any faith in the many yarns we hear. The sooner it is over the better, not that I am anxious to get away out of the danger, but if it can be settled without the loss of another life, it will be all the better. I am glad to say our wounded are still doing well. I am sorry to say that some of the troops are very dangerously wounded. Lieutenant Colonel Northey of the 3rd/60th rifles among the number. Bulger is walking about the camp, very cheerful, showing the bullet that was extracted from his arm.

*Sunday, 6 April 1879*

Beautiful moonlight all night. Nothing of any note transpired here last night. We can now see the general's party a few miles off, advancing towards us in quite a different direction from that in which they went. The column arrived here after dinner. They did not meet the enemy while they were away. A most melancholy affair with them this morning. They were in laager with military outposts out as usual and some of John Dunn's men stationed a little distance off in a deserted kraal. One of the natives thought he saw something. He challenged and then fired, alarming the whole camp. The natives made a rush for the laager and got amongst the picket of the 3rd/60th Rifles. The rifles in the trenches, mistaking Dunn's natives for the Zulus, opened fire, and the mistake was not discovered until one or two of Dunn's men was killed and several of the 3rd/60th Rifles wounded. It is bad enough to be fired upon by the enemy, but to be shot at by your own comrades, maimed for life or possibly killed, I think very sad. I saw several of the poor fellows who were wounded pass today

<sup>1</sup>The Martini Henry was the first breach-loading small rifle issued in quantity to British forces. It was single-cartridge loading, single shot, 0.45-inch calibre and weighed 9 pounds. The bullet fired weighed 1.1 ounces, and was of hardened lead. It spread on impact, causing fearful injuries.

<sup>2</sup>2nd Battalion, Warwickshire Regiment.

<sup>3</sup>These are the old Napoleonic War-style muzzle-loading rifles, using a separate paper cartridge and ball. They were slow to load, needing a ramrod. The Tower mark probably means that they are part of the inventory of the Tower of London, and may have come from the stores at Woolwich Arsenal.

in the ambulance wagons. One of Dunn's men got as far as the trench when he was thrown back with the point of a bayonet. We were rather surprised when the column arrived opposite our laager. They did not stop. They are gone on to form another camp. I suppose we shall join them tomorrow. I was writing a letter to my dear wife when the general arrived. I thought there might be an opportunity to send. As I was doing so I heard a mounted man ask the general if he should take anything down to the Tugela for him as he was going there. I closed up my letter smartly and kept my eye on the man till I got an opportunity to speak to him. Then I asked him if he would take a letter for me. With pleasure, he said, and as it was not franked he said he would do that for me when he got down there. I thanked him and felt very pleased, more especially as they say it will catch the mail that leaves Natal tomorrow.

*Monday, 7 April 1879*

I am very sorry to say I have not been very well during the night. I was very sick yesterday afternoon and felt very ill all night. This morning I took a little medicine and I am glad to say I feel much better now. Lieutenant Colonel Northey died last night from the wounds received on the 2nd. Greatly lamented by all his regiment, they came across from the other laager to attend his funeral. We are preparing for a move to the new camping ground. We are all very pleased as the place is getting nearly too bad to live in. Only a short distance from here the stench is something frightful from the dead bodies laying about.

The men from Ekowe yesterday passed through it and described it as horrid. There are sixty eight of our men to go down to Tugela as an escort and to remain there to garrison Fort Tenedos. They are picking all the 'misfits' for the duty. The remainder stops here with the 57th, the 3rd/60th and the 91st regiment [to] build a fort. It is very amusing to see our native contingent do their war dance. I have just been watching a company of them about three hundred in number. They form a rough line in front of their leader or head man of their tribe that is with them. They sing and make hideous noise until one of the company give a yell, rushes out in front of all the rest, throw himself on the ground then jump up and digs his assagai into the ground as if he was killing an enemy, then run a good distance away, leaping as he goes, yelling horribly, and puts himself in the [most] ungracious position possible. When he does something that those looking on consider clever, they yell too, I suppose to encourage him. When he is nearly exhausted by cutting all these capers, he joins the group. Immediately another one makes a start to try and excel in cutting capers and making grimaces. They carry this on for hours, and often

commence when they have come in from a hard march and a long day's work. We left our fighting laager this morning, but being rear guard we had to wait till everything was out of it, which was very late. When we got to where those from Ekowe were laagered, we found they had to shift also. After waiting here for a long time without any dinner, we heard they were going to kill the cattle for our dinner. All hands were pretty hungry. They were not at all pleased with this news, for in the first place we should have to wait some considerable time before we got the beef, and then we should have to cook it. Not having any fires lit, it would take some time and, perhaps, before cooked the order would come to march. This was explained to the commander, and he interceded and got preserved beef served out to us. A court martial was held today on the picket of the 3rd/60th Rifles for coming into the laager when the alarm was sounded the morning they were fired upon. All the blame was thrown onto the sergeant of the picket. The court sentenced him to five years penal servitude. We all think this a most severe punishment indeed, but the general has confirmed the sentence, and it is rumoured that the general said he would have confirmed it if he had been sentenced to be shot.

*Tuesday, 8 April 1879*

We are now on a high hill in a very commanding position. We did not make any ditch last night. The men for the Tugela left at 3 am. I am sorry to say I am not quite well yet. The scouts reported this morning that the enemy was crossing the Inyezand river.<sup>1</sup> A vigilant lookout is being kept. Our natives are some little distance off; they have entrenched themselves. We have also got a good trench round our position, and I think that if the Zulus come here and show fight we shall be able to give a good account of ourselves. Commander Brackenbury read the findings of the court martial on the sergeant of the 3rd/60th Rifles. In addition to the five years penal servitude he is reduced to the ranks. We can see a small encampment a very long way off, supposed to be Shrings Post.<sup>2</sup>

*Wednesday, 9 April 1879*

Our entrenchments are all finished, and the place is pretty strong. We have to send a few men over to the native contingent's laager. One of our rockets, Gatling gun and crew, were sent over last night. Some of the soldiers have to go also. The *Boadicea's* men will go alternatively with

<sup>1</sup>River Inyezani. This is about 150 miles north-west of Eshowe in Swaziland. However, this region was also engulfed by the war.

<sup>2</sup>Not identified.

ours. Yesterday full rations were issued for the first time, and not before wanted for everyone was grumbling about it. I am sorry to say there is a deal of sickness here. There are several bad cases of dysentery. I am sorry I cannot say I am better. This morning I thought I should have to give up duty, but after taking a little medicine I feel a trifle better. I did feel quite feverish, and now I feel very weak. The arrangements of the camp are improving. The orders are that everyone should go out of the camp and bivouac five hundred yards away for the day to prevent the accumulation of rubbish and to allow the laager to get well dry after the heavy dews. I do not go as I have to attend the signals should there be any and look after the staff, who were on the lookout. The doctor's staff and all the sick remain inside. The men are to return to the laager before sunset. We have not yet been able to open communications by signal with any other camp. Colonel Clarke of the 57th Regiment is the senior officer here and seem to be going into his duty with a deal of zeal.

*Good Friday, 11 April 1879*

I did not make any notes yesterday being indisposed, but I am pleased to say that this morning I am a little better and was able to eat a little food. The convoy from the Tugela arrived all safe last night. Ten or eleven wagons came up with only a few wounded men to guard them. Some of us were fortunate to have some clothing sent up, and it was not before we wanted it, for we only had what we stood in. I also received a white working rig that I sent to the ship for. We were all in hopes of getting some letters from home with this convoy, but we were disappointed. The *Boadiceas* and the *Tenedos* had theirs, but the poor unfortunate *Shahs* had to go without. We have been able to see the papers with the account of Colonel Wood's battles,<sup>1</sup> in which he has had very heavy losses. I had a letter from Wells and one from Laudercombe in which I learned that our old friend Fillimore, ERA, has been invalided home in the *Tamar*<sup>2</sup> when she came back from the Cape the second time with troops. We had a general parade this evening – a few field movements before Colonel Clarke, the whole force combined. A lot of cattle was sent up for our use from the Tugela with only two drivers, so this part of the country must be pretty clear of the enemy.

<sup>1</sup>Col. Evelyn Wood, VC, invaded Zulu territory on 6 January 1879, and established himself at Kambula. After Isandlwana he had several battles with the Zulus with some success, but also some bloody failures.

<sup>2</sup>*Tamar*, rigged iron steam troopship, 4,650 tons, 1863; base ship, 1897; scuttled, Hong Kong, 1941.

*Saturday, 12 April 1879*

First thing this morning our sick men were sent down to the Tugela, also a lot of empty wagons. Three of the Naval Brigade were sent down, one company of soldiers from each of the regiments to accompany them down. I think my health is improving. This evening the two runners who were sent to the Tugela this morning with the letters returned, having, they said, been driven back by the enemy. We have heard nothing whatever about our sick and the convoy that went with them. I saw them myself after dinner, twelve or fourteen miles off. I hope they have got through all right. It would indeed be very sad thing to have another lot of men cut up.

*Easter Sunday, 13 April 1879*

A beautiful day. What different spirits we would be in if we were at home in dear old England today, but here it passes on the same as any ordinary day with the exception of prayers. This evening the convoy arrived with eleven wagons. The same men that left here yesterday returned with those today. Our men must have arrived at the Tugela all right or we would have heard before now. I have just heard from Walls of the fall of the MAA's committee<sup>1</sup> on board.

*Easter Monday, 14 April 1879*

Everything quiet, no sign of the enemy. They didn't seem inclined to have another trial with us. We hear there is another column to be formed and sent up about the 20th, then suspect we shall make a start further towards the King's Kraal. A draught of 150 men for the 57th Regiment arrived here last night, also Captain Lord Gifford of Ashanti fame. This afternoon four female prisoners and several children were brought in. One of the women and one child were wounded. I hear that Dunn's men killed nine Zulus where they found them. One of the women picked up a rifle and shot one of Dunn's men dead. They have had their wounds dressed soon they came in.

*Tuesday, 15 April 1879*

A convoy left here this morning accompanied by three companies of soldiers and a native battalion. Everything still very dull. This life is getting monotonous. I hear that they have sent all the Zulu women and children away with the exception of the two that were wounded. Our men

<sup>1</sup>Not identified.

had a little independent drill this evening. A few letters arrived, and some of them from England. I did not get one, but we are all in high hope of getting some very soon. I see by the home papers that our captain is greatly praised at home for the discretion he used on turning back to Natal without waiting for a direct order from home. The announcement in the House of Commons that he had done so was received with load of cheers and his name asked for, which was received with counter-cheers from both sides of the house.

*Wednesday, 16 April 1879*

Nothing new today, only I feel very queer again. Our men and all the troops went for a two hour route march this afternoon under the command of their respective commanding officers. I did not accompany them myself.

*Thursday, 17 April 1879*

A convoy was sighted this afternoon. An officer has come in from it to say they will not be in here till tomorrow morning. I also heard they have a heavy mail for us. I hope its our English mail. Four Zulus came into our line of sentries today. A flag of truce. Colonel Clarke went out to them and had a palaver and sent them away again. I have not been able to hear what their business was. A full parade this evening and a little drill by the Colonel. I am feeling a little better today.

*Friday, 18 April 1879*

A Zulu was supposed to have come down within sight of our picket last night. They hailed him and got no reply, and then he disappeared. They did not alarm the camp, but the picket was reinforced. The convoy with about 36 wagons came in this afternoon, and I am sorry to say we were nearly all disappointed with regards our letters. A few came, and from England as late as the 12th of March, but I was not one of the fortunate ones. Our detained mails have not yet arrived.

*Saturday, 19 April 1879*

We had rather a stiff breeze last night, with sky all overcast but it did not rain. It is quite cold this morning.

*Sunday, 20 April 1879*

The wind was quite high all last night, and a little rain at times, which made it very miserable for sleeping in the open. We are still without tents. They served out a little rum, but it was white, anything but good. I am sorry to say I am still very bad with dysentery. We had another false alarm this afternoon, caused by the native contingent coming in an unusual formation.

*Monday, 21 April 1879*

Two more Zulus came in first thing this morning, and had a palaver with the colonel and were sent back again. I was obliged to go in the sick list this morning. I must confess I was beginning to get a bit alarmed, as one of the 60th Rifles died yesterday and another one this afternoon of the same complaint. This afternoon about 30 Zulus were seen coming over the hills towards our camp loaded up with their domestic traps. We reported the circumstances to the colonel, who said it was all right, there would be others coming in during the day. Later on eight women and children and several men – a chief called Naquindo was among this party.

*Tuesday, 22 April 1879*

I feel much better this morning. The medicine I took yesterday did me good, not so much blood passed since. There are about forty more Zulus just come in. There is a large convoy going down to the Tugela this morning and these Zulus are to accompany them. The convoy has gone, taking a great number of wagons, forty sick and over a hundred Zulu men, women and children. They gave themselves up. The whole of the 57th Regiment went with them as an escort. I feel a trifle better this evening. We have had a little music this evening. The 91st fife and drum band gave us some very nice tunes.

*Wednesday, 23 April 1879*

The long looked for letters have arrived at last. I got four, the latest dated September 10th, 1878, so I did not get very late news of them, but if they are old, I am very pleased with them, and thank God my little family was quite well up to that date. They are the letters that were stopped coming out to the Pacific for us. A very large convoy came up today, over a hundred wagons. There is a rumour that we move on from here in a day or two.

*Thursday, 24 April 1879*

All the *Shah* Brigade, with the exception of the sick, [and] the whole of the 57th Regiment, left here this morning with a number of wagons to go five miles farther on to build a fort and remain there. I am very sorry to be left behind, but the commander told me I should pick them up again tomorrow. I think I am improving a little. The native battalion also went this morning.

*Friday, 25 April 1879*

After dinner today preparations were made to send the sick on to the other compound. They gave us a covered wagon. We were kept sitting in the wagons for two hours before starting. A very rough ride it was too. Lieutenant Henderson went by the same wagon as I did. We arrived at the new laager at about 5 pm; we had a dreadful shaking, but there was something in store for me to cheer me up when I got there. After being in camp about ten hours the mail arrived. I had the joy of receiving two letters from my dear little heart-broken wife. I have very good news for they are all in very good health. My two little 'cherubs' are doing remarkably well. Thank God for that.

*Saturday, 26 April 1879*

I am pleased to say I feel much better today. I have written a letter today in answer to the two I received from my dear wife. The laager is very well situated and well entrenched now. After the very good news I had from home yesterday I received some sad and melancholy news from the ship, to the effect that my very much respected and esteemed friend Fillimore is dead. It was the last of my thoughts to hear of his death, although he was ill when we left the ship. It appears that he died in Simon's Town hospital having been landed there from the *Tamar* with remittent fever. I am very glad my old friend Brunnen was present and attended the burial, which would have been greatly neglected had he not been there.

*Sunday, 27 April 1879*

I am glad to say I am still improving in health. The commander, Mr. Smith-Dorrien,<sup>1</sup> and Sherlock the signalman went away on horse back

<sup>1</sup>Sir Horace Lockwood Smith-Dorrien (1858–1930) also served in India and Egypt, commanding a battalion at Omdurman, 1898. He was deeply committed to the formation of the Territorial Army in 1907. He was General Commanding the II<sup>nd</sup> Corps in France, 1914, but was relieved of his command after ordering the troops to retreat in the face of the German gas attack at Ypres, 1915.

ten miles on the sea coast to try and sight the *Forrester* gunboat. All the mounted men went as guard. The Commander told me he was sorry I could not go, but hoped I would soon be better. The mounted party has returned, but was not successful. A sub-Lieutenant of the *Tenedos* had three shots fired at him while he was bathing, but was not struck.

*Monday, 28 April 1879*

This is a very dull day. The 57th has just flogged one of their men. There are one or two soldiers being flogged every day, while I am glad to say our men are quite a credit to the Service as to character. The commander has not had a crime brought before him yet, and I hope it will continue so.

*Tuesday, 29 April 1879*

A convoy left here this morning consisting of one hundred and thirteen wagons. The 60th Rifles and two companies of the 91st regiment formed the escort. A great number of sick men were sent down; seven of our men were among the number. Lieutenant Drummond also went down (not sick). I hear Mr. Abbot is coming in his place. All the *Tenedos* men have gone down to join their ship, as she is ordered home. There were only about forty of them altogether. I think they were all very much disappointed. The mounted men saw some Zulus this afternoon.

*Wednesday, 30 April 1879*

I am very pleased to be able to say I am out of the sick list. Our men are hard at work building a fort in the centre of the laager. It is to be called Fort Chelmsford. The 57th are assisting. Our men are doing one face. I suppose the 60th and the 91st do the remainder.

*Thursday, 1 May 1879*

Supposed to have been a few Zulus seen this morning. Mounted men were sent out but did not see them.

*Friday, 2 May 1879*

At 11 o'clock Mr. Smith-Dorrien and I started on a little expedition to the sea coast. We had two of the mounted infantry horses and an escort of five mounted infantry and five mounted volunteers, and two of Dunn's men

followed on foot, taking a small set of flags, a staff and halyards for signalling, if we could see her. We could not see her, and returned to camp about 3 pm. We went about seven miles on a hill so that we could see the sea and camp at the same time.

*Saturday, 3 May 1879*

Still building the fort. We have erected a flag staff on one corner of it.

*Sunday, 4 May 1879*

At sunrise this morning we hoisted the Union Jack of old England on the fort for the first time. The convoy arrived from the Tugela. Mr. Abbot, Mr. Hamilton, and the three men who were sent to bring the mess clothing up arrived. All the men's bags and clothing are here now. I received letters from Wells and Laudracombe. A lot of papers arrived that were kindly sent out from England by Admiral d'Horsey's wife. We are all very pleased with them and appreciate her kindness.

*Monday, 5 May 1879*

Convoy left here this morning, taking a lot of people to the Tugela hospital.

*Tuesday, 6 May 1879*

We have heard the *Forester*<sup>1</sup> was off the coast yesterday. She was seen by our mounted men, who reported it.

*Wednesday, 7 May 1879*

The Commander, Colonel Clark, and Mr. Smith-Dorrien left here with all the available mounted men and John Dunn's contingent to visit the drift in the river that we have to cross when we make the next move, and also to reconnoitre the country in that direction.

<sup>1</sup>*Forester*, Composite steam gunboat, 455 tons, 1877; two 64-pounders; coal hulk 1894; sold 1904. No suitable landing sites were known on the Zulu coast, and this hampered the supply of the expedition in the coastal area. *Forester* carried out a survey of the coast of Zululand after the battle of Gingindlovu, establishing the suitability of Port Durnford (on the coast in the same latitude as Eshowe) as a base.

*Thursday, 8 May 1879*

The fort is getting near completion. This evening the English mail arrived, and I am blessed with two letters from my dear wife who with the little ones I am glad to say are quite well. Also one from my aunt Louisa.

*Friday, 9 May 1879*

A convoy arrived this morning. A canteen is also to be started for dry goods, which will be very good and useful providing they do not charge too much for their goods. We have heard of the death of Reed, one of *Boadicea's* signalmen who was lately sent down. Commander Romilly has arrived and taken charge of the *Boadicea's* men. One of the Royal Engineers died last night after only a few hours illness. He was buried this morning.

*Saturday, 10 May 1879*

An empty convoy left here this morning escorted by the 91st. A great number of sick were sent down, twelve of the *Shah's* being among them, including three officers, Lieutenant Henderson, Sub-lieutenant Hamilton, and Mr. Cook, Gunner, the first with diarrhoea, the other two with fever. Their three servants were sent with them to attend and wait upon them on their way down. We were ordered this morning to prepare for the Colonel's inspection at 10 a.m. We fell in expecting to be inspected by him, instead of which he had us drawn up to speak to us. He said 'Officers, non Commissioned Officers and men of the Naval Brigade, I have considered it my duty to make a special report to the Major General Commanding of the very ready manner and the good spirits in which you have performed your work on the redoubt, and now I have great pleasure in conveying to you the General Commanding's sincere thanks.' Commander Brackenbury returned thanks on behalf of the brigade and we were then dismissed. This bit of praise came quite unexpectedly, and I think the men appreciated it. A canteen opened here today but the prices are very high, but really while we have money we cannot resist having little dainties. Prices are, small box of sardines, 1/6, pot of jam, 2/-, pot of salmon, 2/6.

*Sunday, 11 May 1879*

This morning the 57th left here for the Amatikuli river to bring up a convoy tomorrow. Now there are only the 60th Rifles and ourselves left to defend this place. Colonel Law and Captain Cook, Royal Artillery,

made their appearance in the camp this morning. Our commander and Lieutenant Lindsay have gone back as far as the Amaticuli with them. I am now going to drop a line to my dearly beloved wife.

*Monday, 12 May 1879*

The convoy arrived today but did not bring up mail for us as we expected. *Boadicea's* got theirs last night. Our men went outlying picket last night as the 57th and 91st were away. The 91st are stopping at Fort Crealock, that is at the Amatikuli river.

*Tuesday, 13 May 1879*

I have just heard the sad news of the death of an acquaintance of mine, Corporal Olden of the Royal Artillery, one of the men we brought from St. Helena. He was the schoolmaster there, and a married man. Only a few days before he left here his wife gave birth to a child. He was only ill two days. We have also heard of the death of Owen Cooper, AB, of our ship. He went down to the Tugela with Mr. Cook, Gunner, to attend him and died after a few hours illness.

*Wednesday, 14 May 1879*

I received another letter from my dear wife. They are all quite well at home but sad at heart. Two Zulus came in this evening. They say their stories do not agree. They are now in the fort.

*Thursday, 15 May 1879*

A little excitement this morning. A white flag was seen flying on a tree about four miles off. We at once reported the circumstance to the brigadier-major who set out with the interpreter, but when they arrived on the spot they found that one of the native contingent had put it up for no earthly purpose. He was brought in a prisoner and examined. I do not know the result, but he was released and sent to duty. The two Zulus are still here, but for what purpose I know not. More rumours today that Citiwayo [*sic*] does not wish to fight the British, and more I hope it is true.

*Friday, 16 May 1879*

A very strong reconnoitring party went out this morning. Commanders Brackenbury and Romilly accompanied them. John Dunn arrived this

morning and is now in conference with the Colonel and the two Zulus, so now we can understand why they have been detained.

Here my notes ended until I arrived on board the *Shah*, as I was taken ill with fever. I shall now have to write up from memory. Dr. Shields put me in the sick list and told me he should send me down to the Tugela. I asked him to allow me to remain up at the fort with our men, but this time I could not have my wish, as I had had on two previous occasions when he wanted to send me down. The commander told me he was very sorry I should have to go, but I should, no doubt, have a chance to come up again when I got better. He said the doctor had told him I should not get any better up here.

*Monday, 19 May 1879*

We were put in the bullock wagons to be conveyed to the Tugela. I was so very weak that I had to be assisted in walking to the wagon. Turner, the boatswain's mate was in the same wagon with me. We had not gone very far before I felt worse, caused, I think, by the dreadful shaking I got in the wagon. The road was very rough, and the driver (a black, of course) did not seem to have the least feeling for us who were lying down very ill, and it seemed to us that they picked out the roughest part of the road and went over all the big stones. I felt very thankful when we arrived at the Amatikuli river, or rather Fort Crealock, for had we gone on much further I think that I should have died. We stopped here for the night and slept in the wagons, those that could sleep. I got out after dark to go to the rear, but was obliged to call out to some soldiers to come and assist me back to the wagon again, and in it I passed the worst night that I ever experienced in all my life. In fact I thought I should die. At times I was afraid I should be light headed, but, thank God, I was never unconscious throughout my illness. I was very glad when daylight came. We only had a little grass to lay upon and there was not quite room for all who had to stop in the wagon.

*Tuesday, 20 May 1879*

They started us off early for the hospital at Fort Pearson. The travelling was about the same as yesterday, something awful to bear in the state we were in. I think someone in charge might have made the drivers more careful. We arrived the same evening, and we were all very glad we were to get out or be taken out of those miserable wagons. We were put into tents and marquees, the worst cases in the latter. The place was not very

comfortable for sick, but no doubt as comfortable as could be made under the circumstances. I was put on a low diet, only a little rice and arrowroot, and it was a very small bit of it that I could eat. I had condensed milk to drink. Dr. Thompson of the *Active* attended me here and was pretty kind. Our marquee was situated in rather a bad place, as the funerals all passed close to the door and it did not improve my spirits to see them pass so often, for as many as five passed in one day, but up to this time only one of the *Shah's* had died. Owen Cooper, AB, he died rather suddenly. He was taken much as he was on a former occasion on aboard the ship, just as he was about to take part in a theatrical entertainment. He came down with Mr. Cook, the gunner, as his servant. I did not improve at all at the Tugela during my stay there. General Crealock came in the marquee and said Her Majesty had sent a telegram thanking us for what we did at Gingiulovo and Ekowe. I remained at Fort Pearson about three days and was then sent with others down to Herwin Hospital. Here again we were put under canvas. In the same marquee with me there are two poor fellows quite out of their minds and they are like skeletons. This was a beastly place and I don't think I should ever have got well there. We were on very low beds and underfoot was nothing but nasty red dust which covered everything and made the place very uncomfortable. I had the same diet as at Tugela, but the doctor I cannot say anything good of. He should have been somewhere else instead of in the Army as a doctor. I don't think he was quite right in his head. I was delighted when he asked me if I thought I was strong enough for the journey down to Durban. I said yes as I was longing to get into better hands. While here I got a little paper and an envelope. I scribbled a few lines to my dear wife, but I found it very nearly too much for me. A scripture reader very kindly lent me a pen and ink, but I did not send it from here as I had no chance. We left Herwin on the 28th of May and arrived at a place called Compensation Flats. There were tents here to sleep in but I did not move out of the wagon. This trip we had mule wagons, eight in each team. They did not shake us nearly so much as the bullock wagons.

*Monday, 29 May 1879*

We started from Compensation Flats early, After a miserable night of rain, We arrived at Verulam about 4 p.m. and outspanned for a short time. Here the inhabitants were very kind indeed to us all. All who could walk went into the Volunteers drill shed, and there found a splendid spread ready for them. Nearly everything that could be, I think, was got in the way of nourishment for the sick. I was unable to get out of the wagon myself. A lady brought out a cup of tea and some ham sandwiches. I told her I could

not eat. She asked me if I could get out and I said No! She then left taking tea as well as the sandwiches. I felt disappointment, for I thought I should like to have had the tea, but it was not for long – for she came back very quickly with some men to assist me out. They took me into her private house and laid me on a sofa. A table was already stocked with everything one could wish for. Custards, eggs, jellies, hot tea, cocoa and meat if you could eat it. They made me eat an egg and some nice thin bread and butter and a cup of tea which I enjoyed very much indeed. It was the best drop of tea I had tasted since the last cup I had with my dear wife at home. The lady and gentleman of the house were very kind and did everything that was possible for me. They had a pretty little baby girl and she was the same age as my Lilly. I told them I had two, one I had never seen. It brought tears to my eyes when I looked at the dear child as it brought my own to mind, and I thought what a state my poor wife would be in did she know I was here so ill, and what would she have given to be there to assist me as these kind people were doing. I shall never forget the kindness I received from these people. I lay there till the wagons were ready to start. They put some thin bread and butter in some paper and put it in my greatcoat pocket, then put me in the wagon and wished me ‘Good bye’. The bread and butter I found in my pocket two months after when I was coming out of hospital to go onboard the ship. We did not arrive in Saccharine in time for the ordinary train. They had to send up a special one for us. We were kept waiting for nearly two hours in the cold drizzling rain. At last the train arrived. I was put into a covered van with a stretcher to lay upon. There was a sick officer in the same van. When we reached Durban I found to my disappointment that our journey was not quite over. We were put into mule vans and taken down to the Auxiliary Base Hospital at Addington. This was a new hospital built for the inhabitants of Natal but lent to the military as soon as finished. It was a very nice place. The worst feature was its being built on sand and when the wind blew it was very disagreeable. The inside was very clean and comfortable, and I was very pleased when they put me in a comfortable bed. I saw by my diet sheet that they called my fever ‘Slow Continuous’. The ward I was put into held 16 beds. They were all occupied. One bluejacket besides myself was there. The rest were all soldiers. In the next bed to me was a young man called Richards of the 91st who had been wounded in the thigh at Gingulhova [*sic*]. He could get about pretty well and everything he could do for me he did. In about a week or ten days I felt myself recovering. As soon as I was able to eat the doctor gave me plenty of nourishment, port wine, milk, lemonade, roast mutton chop, two eggs, bread and butter and tea. As I got stronger he gave me roast chicken and two pint bottles of ale in lieu of wine. With all this I soon began naturally

to pick up. I had fallen away to a shadow of my former self. As soon as it was known on board the ship that I was down in the hospital, my friend Wells and my messmate Laudracombe came to see me. I was very glad to see their old familiar faces. They came often to see me. Haynes and other messmates who were all very kind to me also came and I shall ever feel grateful to them. They never came without bringing something good for me. I think one needs to be situated as I was to fully appreciate the kindness of true friends. I got my letters from home very soon after the steamer arrived as no time was lost in sending them on shore from the ship. My friend Richards continued to assist me until he was sent away to convalescent hospital at Cape of Good Hope. I was very sorry when he went as he had been very kind but by this time I was able to do pretty well for myself. I saw plenty of strange faces while there, because the men came and went very often. Sergeant Wainlock, RA, was in the same ward as me. A gun ran over his ankle. We were great friends. Also Sergeant Burnett of the same Corps. Wainlock came from St. Helena in *Shah*. Now I must say a little about the good people of Durban, some of whom were never tired of exerting themselves on behalf of the sick and wounded and who often cheered the hearts of many a poor fellow who was in despair of ever seeing again any person who cared to speak a consoling word to comfort him. It was good to have a lady come to your bedside and enquire for your health, and give you some little luxury that would agree with your complaint. They would bring among other things eggs, jams, custards, sponge cakes, biscuits, guavas, oranges, in fact anything that money would buy. Hardworking among these good people was a Mr. Coakes, postmaster of Durban, and his family, three sons and two daughters. They were so regular in attendance at the hospital that if one or two of the family did not come every other day, the patients were quite disappointed. The days they were absent were devoted to attending the sick at Durban Hospital. Not only would he bring bodily nourishment but would do all he could for the good of our souls. He would gather all those who were able and willing into one of the large wards and preach us a good sermon as I ever heard. The service always opened with a hymn, which was always sung in great spirit by the men. His eldest daughter, a good young lady, I should think about 20 years of age, was most energetic in her efforts to relieve the sick. She always had a kind word for us as well as something good in the baskets. Her kind smiling face and the tender manner in which she went about her work was indeed a pleasure to us all. Her sister was about eleven or twelve. When it was possible to get them, she would bring pretty little flowers and give them to those who were in bed sick. This young lady was always very pleased when she could find a rose to give me. I have often seen poor fellows, who could not take

anything to eat from anyone, take the flowers from this little girl and hold them for hours, smelling them occasionally. One poor fellow I recollect especially. His name was Batchelor. The day before he died he had a flower from her and held it for a very long time. The same flower lay upon his box for some time after his death. A number of scripture readers came out with the troops. A Mr. Williams was the gentleman that used to visit our Hospital. He was very zealous in his duties and was liked by all. He too was very kind, going from place to place on his way down, begging for tobacco, pipes, oranges or anything else they liked to give for the sick. He would often have tea with us in our wards, but when he did so he brought a plum cake with him. This gentleman had an attack of dysentery, but had quite recovered before I left. I must speak in great praise of Surgeon Major Leslie, who was the senior medical officer and attended me in my sickness. He was most kind and attentive to me during my stay in the hospital. Sergeant Wright of the Army Service Corps in charge of the hospital was also very kind to me. During my stay at the hospital the Prince Imperial was killed<sup>1</sup> and the body taken to the Cape by *Boadicea*, from thence to England by the *Orantis*.<sup>2</sup> Sir Garnet Wolseley and Staff arrived and went to Port Durnford in the *Shah*, but could not land there on account of the very rough weather, and from what I can hear the *Shah* had rather a bad time of it there. In the shallow water the seas broke completely over the ship. She got back to Natal all safe, and Sir Garnet landed again and went to the front by road. The Battle of Ulundi<sup>3</sup> was fought and won by our troops under Lord Chelmsford while I was in hospital. There were a great number of our men came to the hospital from the front while I was there and all went on board before me. Some of them were sent home, and some of them to Simon's Bay Hospital. I did not

<sup>1</sup>The exiled Louis Napoleon, the Prince Imperial of France, and Bonapartist pretender to the throne of France, appointed himself an observer of the war, and was attached to Lt.-Col. Harrison, Assistant Quartermaster General in charge of supplying the 2nd Division, South African Field Force. The Prince was permitted to accompany patrols sent out to find a suitable supply route to the troops. One such patrol, consisting of a Lt. Cary, 98th foot, and six men, part of a detachment of Natal [Bettington's] Horse, was ambushed while they were dismounted near the River Tshotshosi on 2 June 1879, and the Prince failed to remount his unruly horse, which ran away, and was stabbed to death by the Zulus.

<sup>2</sup>Orient Line used the name *Orantes* for its passenger steamers, but no details have been found of a ship of this name at this time. It would make sense to use a passenger liner to send his body home, as they were routinely equipped with refrigeration by this date.

<sup>3</sup>This battle took place on 4 July 1879, and was decisive, as the Zulus were defeated on the open plain, and not in a defensive position. The British used the infantry square. The regular cavalry were protected within the square, and some irregular horse skirmished with the Zulus and led them onto the square. The Zulus called it the battle of oCwecweni, the 'battle of the corrugated iron sheets', drawing a likeness between the ranked bayonets and corrugated iron. After the Zulus had been driven off with high casualties the cavalry came into action and pursued them. Zulu losses were about 1,500 while the British lost three officers and ten men.

wish to be sent to the latter, neither did I wish to come out of hospital until I was quite recovered, especially as I was getting such good treatment. I am very sorry to say death has been very busy among our men. The first death I heard of when I got to the hospital was Philip Crompton, the Marine Artillery man who was the leading man in our theatrical entertainments. It appears he was convalescent and was sent on board the ship from this hospital, where he did not take proper care of himself. He had another very heavy attack of dysentery that he never recovered from. He was buried in the Durban cemetery with naval honours; the captain attended his funeral. This was the second death and both belonged to our amateur party. Nash, the comedian, was invalided [home], where he arrived safe. News reached us of the death of many a poor fellow who had left the ship well and hearty. Weadon, who was on his way down, died at Fort Crealock and was buried there. Next I heard of Symonds, the cooper's, death at Tugela and Shepherd and Oliver. The latter had been a messmate of mine. He was a strong young fellow of about 20 years and would have grown into a robust man. While on our mess he had an accident. He fell down a hatchway and put his collar bone out. The next I heard was that poor Langford, who was tentmates with me all the time I was at the front, was so very ill that when he arrived at Verulam they would not let him come any further. Radnor, who was also coming down sick, was left behind to attend to him. He remained there two days when they sent for him. It was thought he was a little better, but the poor fellow died a day or two after he arrived at the Durban Hospital. When news was received aboard the ship they were told he would be buried the same day, so they could not bury him with Naval honours. I believe the men and officers were rather upset about this, as he was much respected by all, and they would have liked to have given the last honour due to his body. The poor fellow leaves a widow and one child. I hope he and all the remainder are all gone to a happier place. He had left a letter in his box in case anything should happen to him to be forwarded to his wife. The poor fellow, since he was at the front, had news of the death of his daughter. He felt it very much, and often spoke to me upon the subject. When I left Fort Chelmsford he was quite well, and was the last to shake hands with me, hoping he should soon see me well again. About a fortnight before I came out of hospital, the Stafford House Committee<sup>1</sup> sent two female

<sup>1</sup>There were five Stafford House Committees, all called together about this time at Trentham for various charitable purposes by George Granville William, 3rd Duke of Sutherland, 1850–1903. These purposes varied from railways for Third-World countries to nursing contingents. The relevant one here is the Stafford House South African Aid Committee. Sister Ruth, referred to shortly, must have been to the Russo-Turkish War on behalf of the Stafford House Committee for the Relief of Sick and Wounded Turkish Soldiers. See Staffordshire Archive Service, Documents D593/P/26/4 and D593/P/26/2.

nurses to our hospital, and they soon became very popular as they made themselves very agreeable and did everything they could for us. They had a large stock of goods at their disposal, consisting of jams, jellies, cocoa and milk, and many other things which they distributed very liberally indeed. They were called Sisters Ruth and Elizabeth, and their dress when on duty was a serge one, white apron and cap, and a band on one arm with the letters SHC on it. Sister Ruth was an old stager, having been some years in the hospital on Trinidad in the West Indies and latterly in the Turko-Russian war.<sup>1</sup> In the latter she had gone as far as Skipka Pass [*sic*].<sup>2</sup> They were both very kind and paid great attention to the very bad cases. By the 1st of July I felt quite recovered, the doctor saying I was getting quite fat and he should be able to send me to my ship with the next party that he discharged to her, but when the day came for my discharge yellow jaundice made its appearance on me and I was detained again. Another of our men called Barge died at the Durban Hospital and was buried with naval honours. This makes the ninth that has died belonging to our brigade. Their names are as follows: Langford, gunners mate, Symonds, cooper, Wheadon, Oliver, AB, Shepherd, AB, Cooper, AB, Crompton, RMA, O'Brien, RMLI, Barge, AB.

After the battle of Ulundi orders were given for *Shah* to embark her brigade and the *Actives* when they had finished landing all the stores from the transport at Fort Dwinford [Durnford]. On Monday July 21st I was discharged from hospital. When I arrived at the wharf I found Miss Coakes there with her three brothers waiting to see me off. They brought a basket of oranges and distributed them among our men. She also made me a present of a pretty illuminated diary. Her oldest brother wished to go out to the ship with me, which I agreed to with pleasure, thinking the young lady would like to go off as well. I put the question to her. She said she would be delighted if permission could be obtained. I was determined she should go if I could do anything in it, so I went to the contractor or the

<sup>1</sup>Fighting broke out between Turkey, Bulgaria and Serbia in 1876, the Balkan countries wishing to escape from Turkish hegemony. The Great Powers (Britain, France and Russia) organised a truce, but it eventually failed in 1877. Russia lost patience with the Turkish treatment of the Serbs, and declared war on Turkey, 24 April 1877. Crete and Thessalonica joined in rebellion. Britain wished to remain neutral, but her actions were tempered by the fact that she did not wish the Ottoman Empire to lose control of the Dardanelles, as she did not wish Russia to have easy access to the Mediterranean. By 17 March 1878, Turkey had failed to hold her possessions together, and had signed a peace treaty with Russia. However, Romania now joined in the rebellion. In the end, Turkey permanently lost all these possessions, but retained a foothold in Europe and control of the Dardanelles. Britain had a large say in the settlement, and managed to have Cyprus ceded to her by the Turks.

<sup>2</sup>Actually Shipka, 47°13' N, 29°32' E, near the eastern border of Bessarabia with Odessa province. It must have been quite a journey to reach this area alongside the Turkish forces.

person acting for him and asked. He readily granted my request. It was a beautiful morning and the bar was very smooth, so the trip out was a pleasant one. When we arrived alongside, there being no accommodation ladder, I did not like to ask her if she [would] come up but I got the brother to do so. She wished very much to go on board, but I was afraid the steamer would leave without her. I got over that difficulty by asking the first lieutenant to allow them to remain on board until the next steamer came out, which he was very pleased to do. My only trouble now was how to get her up the ship's side, but my trouble was soon over for as soon as she knew she could come on board she took the ropes in her hand and jumped up as spritely [*sic*] as if she was accustomed to it. Immediately she got on board she recognised several faces whom she had seen in the hospital and shook hands with them. The men were very pleased to see her. All my shipmates were very glad to see me and asked after my health. I showed my visitors all I could of the ship and the machinery, which they took a great interest in. The first lieutenant offered me the use of the captain's room for them to sit in if I wished. Of course I accepted the kind offer. We had seen all by about 11.30 a.m. and as there was no chance of a steamer coming I had to set to work to find something in the way of lunch for them and I succeeded very well indeed. Mr. Day, the wardroom steward gave me some cold beef and mutton and they thoroughly enjoyed it. The steamer did not come out at 1.30 as we expected. I had therefore to entertain them the best way I could. I showed them all my photographs or anything else of interest that I had. We all went on the poop and there Mr. Terry, Assistant Paymaster, got into conversation with them and took them into the wardroom and showed them Mr. Drummond's cabin and some of the other officers' [cabins]. The time passed on and I thought they would like a cup of tea. I procured some bread, butter and condensed milk from which they made a splendid tea (so they said.) About 3.30 the steamer made her appearance. She brought out the portion of the Naval Brigade that was left at Tugela. They had the pleasure of seeing them come on board. Mr. Henderson was in charge of the party. Several dogs, cats and a Zulu Goat accompanied this party. It was really amusing to see them come over the side. Several of them had a little more beer than they could carry properly. After they were all out of the steamer, my friends went down. Miss Coakes displaying great nerve, notwithstanding she had to jump a good height as the steamer was very much lower than the steps on the ship's side. The brother was not quite so successful, for, with the assistance of the ship's corporals he was very nearly dropped overboard instead of into the steamer. They thanked me very kindly for the attention I had paid them and expressed themselves highly delighted with their visit to the *Shah*. I then wished them goodbye and the steamer went into harbour.

*Thursday, 24 July 1879*

At 6.30 pm we weighed anchor and proceeded for Simon's Bay under steam. I think everyone was glad to say good-bye to Natal.

*Sunday 10 August 1879*

At 9-30 we weighed and proceeded under steam, homeward bound once more; we had our long penant<sup>1</sup> flying. The *Juno* and *Swallow* cheered us, but the *Boadicea*'s remained silent. We returned the cheers heartily, for we all consider that we are now on the way for dear old England. They signalled 'May you have a pleasant passage. Goodbye.' All the merchant steamers cheered also. We left the *Juno* preparing for sea, and this afternoon we can see her astern of us steaming. The wind is right ahead. An unkind wind for 'homeward bounders.'<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The long pennant was beloved of artists, as it streamed out in picturesque manner from the main top for many yards. Here it was being used to signify that the ship was due to pay off on arrival at her home port.

<sup>2</sup>*Shah* paid off on 30 September 1879.



## IX

### THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF CHIEF GUNNER ALEXANDER GRANT: HMS *LION* AT THE BATTLE OF JUTLAND, 1916

*Edited by*  
*Eric Grove*

One of the most important documents to become available to naval historians in recent years has been the memoir of Captain Alexander Grant who, as a Chief Gunner, was the Warrant Officer in charge of the armament of HMS *Lion* before and during the Battle of Jutland on 31 May 1916. What his account revealed was the shockingly lackadaisical manner in which ammunition was handled in the Battle Cruiser Fleet and in the Grand Fleet as a whole at the time of Jutland. This, more recent historians have argued, rather than intrinsically poor protection was the reason the three battle cruisers, *Indefatigable*, *Queen Mary* and *Invincible*, blew up when hit in their ammunition systems.<sup>1</sup> Only Grant's courageous insistence on proper precautions in *Lion* prevented the flagship and Battle Cruiser Fleet's ebullient commander David Beatty sharing the same fate. The effect of such a loss, coming in addition to the losses actually suffered, would have made Jutland even more of a disappointment than it was. It is also a sign of the less than perfect staff system in the BCF that Grant's improved system was not imposed on the other ships of the Fleet before the battle. Leaving those vessels to continue in their old and dangerous ways allowed the Germans their major successes of the engagement.

Grant came from the whisky area of Speyside in North East Scotland. Born on 7 March 1872, the son of a poor but upright miller forced into other work by ill health, Grant was able to exploit Scotland's educational opportunities before his family's financial problems forced him to begin work on the land at the age of 11. Grant's imagination was caught when a temporary farm hand who knew an old sailor in the Coastguard Station at Lossiemouth showed him a booklet about the Royal Navy. In 1888 Grant went to the Station to enlist being sent to the boys' training ship

<sup>1</sup>See especially Nicholas A. Lambert, "'Our Bloody Ships' or 'Our Bloody System'?" Jutland and the Loss of the Battlecruisers, 1916', *The Journal of Military History*, 62 (1998), 29–56.

HMS *Lion* on the Tamar via HMS *Clyde*, guardship at Aberdeen, sea passage to London and train to Plymouth. After two years of rigorous training that he always regarded as 'most valuable'<sup>1</sup> he was drafted in 1890 to HMS *Penguin*, a composite sail and steam sloop being used for surveying duties on the Australia Station. The efficient and effective Grant had many opportunities to demonstrate his merits as a seaman and was rapidly promoted through the rates to Petty Officer by the time he left the ship in 1893. After service in *Seraphis*, one of the last Royal Navy manned troopships, Grant joined HMS *Excellent*, recently transferred to buildings on Whale Island, to follow his chosen specialisation of gunnery.

Grant was happy with *Excellent* and its demanding routine and was selected for instructional duties. On his twenty-third birthday he was successfully examined for promotion to warrant officer and, having passed his successive examinations at *Excellent*, was promoted Gunner at the beginning of 1896. After a mobilisation billet in the reserve cruiser *Latona* for the year's manoeuvres, Grant, the service's most promising young Scottish warrant officer, was sent to help run the training ship HMS *Caledonia* that had been established at South Queensferry on the Forth to encourage the under-represented Scots into the Navy. Gunner Grant did much to tighten up the ship's routine and improve both the expectations of the boys and the reputation of the establishment both inside and outside the service.

After a year maintaining the cruiser HMS *Fox* in reserve, Grant obtained his first proper sea-going Gunner's billet, in the First Class Cruiser *Diadem*. Large protected cruisers like *Diadem* were being rapidly replaced by armoured cruisers and after only seven months Grant had to help put the ship into reserve. He remained with her for another half-year before being appointed to the battleship *Illustrious* in 1902. Once more, Grant was being deployed to put a house in order. *Illustrious*, a Mediterranean Fleet ship, had gone through three previous Gunners in a year. Grant did much to improve the situation as the fleet reorganisations of the period passed the 'Majestic' class ship through the Channel Fleet to the new Atlantic Fleet. After making *Illustrious* one of the best performing gunnery ships in the navy, Grant left the obsolescent battleship when it paid off into reserve in 1905.

Grant was next recommended for an appointment on the staff of HMS *Excellent*. He was appointed Gunner-in-Charge of West Battery with

<sup>1</sup>'Through the Hawsepipe', Grant's unpublished memoir, p.19, on which biographical details are based. Copy kindly provided by Dr R. Suddaby of the Imperial War Museum (IWM 66/28311) whose help in first making me aware of the reappearance of this document and supplying me initially with the Jutland chapter and then a complete copy is here acknowledged. See below for the full provenance of this document.

responsibility for instruction on guns of 9.2-in and smaller calibres. He arrived just before Commander Ernle Chatfield joined the establishment to restore its administration after the failure of his predecessor.<sup>1</sup> Grant contributed to this reformation by more rigorous organisation of his staff and examination of the students. He was also involved in other Chatfield initiatives, notably setting up a cadet corps and the display put on for the colonial premiers in 1907. He had made a mark with Chatfield that was to be of some significance later.

In 1908 Grant was appointed as Gunner to the Channel Fleet flagship, the battleship HMS *King Edward VII*. Here he grappled with the problems of what he considered to be a less than successful design in gunnery terms, with too many calibres and a tendency for wetness that played havoc with gunnery equipment. He remained in the ship until 1911 when he returned to *Excellent* as Gunner-in-Charge of Grounds. Promoted to Chief Gunner in 1912, Grant became so indispensable in the running of Whale Island that he was held back from operational duty when war broke out in 1914. Then, however, in June 1915 a sudden call came from the north. Grant was to proceed to South Queensferry to join HMS *Lion*, flagship of the Battle Cruiser Fleet.

Again Grant was being called in as a 'trouble shooter' to sort out the ship's problems and one can detect the hand of *Lion*'s Captain, Ernle Chatfield, in the appointment. He knew from first-hand experience that there was no one better than Grant to do the job. Grant's own account follows and commentary on it will be found in the footnotes. His role in saving the ship by tightening up its ammunition handling arrangements, notably by forbidding the piling up of unprotected cordite charges outside the magazine, is described with typical modesty but the strength of character and moral courage of this upright Scotsman shines through. His key contribution was clearly recognised by his superiors, resulting in his rather unusual promotion.

There may, however, have been elements of a cover-up in Grant's early departure. It was clearly embarrassing to have lost so many ships and suffered such loss of life because of the ignoring of simple magazine precautions. Chatfield says nothing about Grant in his memoirs, recounting the common practice of keeping magazine doors open but putting *Lion*'s survival down to a 'charmed life'.<sup>2</sup> He did not want questions asked as why he as Beatty's senior gunnery adviser had not got the admiral to order similar measures in the other ships, precautions that

<sup>1</sup> See Volume 1 of Chatfield's biography, *The Navy and Defence* (London, 1942), Chapter 7.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 151.

would probably have saved the lives of thousands of men. After Jutland the Admiralty sent a circular to all flag officers specifying much tighter ammunition handling arrangements. Nevertheless the guilt for the catastrophic losses was soon shifted onto inadequate armour protection, something beyond Naval Officers' control.<sup>1</sup> There, despite the best efforts of the Third Sea Lord Rear Admiral Frederick Tudor and Director of Naval Construction Tennyson D'Eyncourt, it stayed, largely due to Jellicoe's influence as First Sea Lord being used to shield his subordinates and himself from censure.<sup>2</sup>

Following his appointment in command of the old destroyer *Griffon*, Grant had an arduous war engaged in anti-submarine patrol and escort work, first in northern waters and then the Irish Sea. For the former work he was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross. After the war ended Grant briefly transferred to the destroyer *Moorsom* before transferring to RN Barracks Chatham from where he went to Yorkshire to keep the mines usable during the 1919 coal strike. Then it was back to Scotland as Assistant Fuelling Officer at Rosyth before a last return to *Excellent* in 1922 as 'Lieutenant of the Island', the finest appointment in the service for a former Warrant Officer Gunner. Here Grant relished the opportunity to restore pre-war standards to an establishment that had got rather slack during the recent conflict. He was also responsible for the appointment throughout the service of Warrant Officer Gunners and those former Gunners promoted Lieutenant. At *Excellent* Grant became a Lieutenant Commander which meant that when he finally retired at the end of 1926 he became a Commander on the Retired List as was then the custom. The following year he received a well-earned CBE in the King's Birthday Honours, an unusual distinction for one of his rank.

This was not the end of Grant's active career, however. Two months after the outbreak of war in 1939 he was invited to take command of HMS *Victory* in Portsmouth dockyard. This he did at the beginning of December, remaining in command throughout the war until 28 September 1945. He was promoted Captain in July 1942.

Shortly after his second retirement Grant was persuaded to write his autobiography, which he completed with the typing assistance of Mrs Florence Bradshaw as a 187-page draft at the beginning of 1947.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Lambert, 'Our Bloody Ships', pp. 47–9.

<sup>2</sup>*Ibid.*, pp. 49–52.

<sup>3</sup>This paragraph was written with the kind assistance of Mr John Grant Geddes, Capt. Grant's grandson, who inherited his aunt's first copy and is preparing a version of the full text for publication by the University of Stellenbosch. He has generously granted his permission for the publication of this version of the Jutland chapter and has suggested some small amendments to reconcile the copies of the document.

Attempts to get the work published using Chatfield's agent Leonard P. Moore unfortunately failed. Grant died on 4 May 1961 leaving the typescript in the hands of his daughter, Second Officer Mary (Molly) J. Grant WRNS.<sup>1</sup> When Arthur Marder was working on the third Jutland volume of *From the Dreadnought to Scapa Flow* his advertising for sources was brought to the attention of Grant's only son, Lieutenant (E) Alexander Charles Grant RN DSC and bar, who put his sister in touch with the historian.<sup>2</sup> This led to Marder's inspecting the typescript and drawing attention to it and its contents in his important Jutland account.<sup>3</sup> The account was then lost again until the 1990s when copies were deposited in the Imperial War Museum and the Royal Naval Museum Portsmouth. These had come via a second copy, apparently retained by Mrs Bradshaw, which she had given to the Ministry of Defence. This allowed fuller information on the tantalising Marder references. It is now possible to read in full the memories of a remarkable officer and, in the chapter printed here (number XIV), the key role he played at one of the pivotal moments in the history of the Royal Navy. It is thus possible to obtain a more balanced assessment of the true strengths and weaknesses of that most maligned of ship types, the battle cruiser.

### H.M.S. *LION* 1915–1916

I travelled overnight from London and then got the first train from Edinburgh to Dalmeny, which brought back memories of *Caledonia* days.<sup>4</sup> Here I found a railway porter of old acquaintance who soon arranged transport for my luggage to Hawes Pier.<sup>5</sup> As I walked down the narrow footpath leading to the Pier, my thoughts went back to the many times I had trodden that path and how often on reaching the crest I found the Port Edgar flag at the masthead of *Caledonia*. This meant a sprint all the way to Port Edgar, otherwise one missed the boat. Then there was that most

<sup>1</sup>Grant had married Margaret Phimister in 1895. They had three daughters, Agnes born 1896 (mother of Mr Geddes), Margaret, born 1903 and Molly, born 1907.

<sup>2</sup>Lt. A. Charles Grant had been promoted from Warrant rank. He died in the 1970s.

<sup>3</sup>Arthur J. Marder, *From The Dreadnought to Scapa Flow*, Vol. 3 *Jutland and After* (Oxford, 1965), p. 174, footnote 13. There is a fuller reference in the 1978 edition mentioning Lt. A. C. Grant. This accounts for the common confusion in referring to Capt. Alexander Grant as 'A.C.'.

<sup>4</sup>Grant had served in the wooden training hulk from 1896 to 1899.

<sup>5</sup>Mis-spelt in the original 'Hawse' as in the 'hawse pipe' of a ship and the title of the memoir. It is probable that most sailors had the nautical spelling in mind especially as both the pier and hotel were in effect the 'hawse pipe' through which passed personnel for ships based in the Forth.

hospitable place so well known to naval officers, the Hawes Hotel.<sup>1</sup> At South Queensferry I was on familiar ground and on that June morning felt much at home as I had many friends and acquaintances in the town. A boat was waiting for me and on the arrival of my baggage we made for my new ship. There was the familiar Forth Bridge and I admired once more this fine feat of engineering. There was something new to me on the other side of the river. The young Rosyth Dockyard with its chimneys belching forth smoke was a hive of industry. Then I looked towards Port Edgar which had been a busy place before the Bridge was built and had then lapsed into disuse. Now it was teeming with destroyer pens and new buildings adjoining. The war without a doubt had put South Queensferry on the map. As we approached the *Lion* I was rather awed by her sleekly powerful appearance. Painted in her battle grey, with tall masts, huge funnels, formidable armament of eight 13.5 guns, she gave one the impression that here was a ship that would give an overwhelming account of herself in action.<sup>2</sup>

On board, the Officer of the Watch, Sub-Lieutenant Lord Burghersh, gave me a most warm greeting and took me along to see the Commander, after which I made the acquaintance of my messmates.<sup>3</sup> Somehow or other it had never occurred to me to wonder why I had been appointed to *Lion*. Here I soon found out. My predecessor had been court-martialled the day previous and dismissed his ship.<sup>4</sup> I was not told the charge against him and never inquired, but it would appear to have been in connection with the ammunition of the ship which I found in a chaotic state. The Gunnery Officer to whom I reported was Lieutenant Commander Longhurst.<sup>5</sup> After a short conversation he turned on to the subject of

<sup>1</sup>See note above; now the Hawes Inn.

<sup>2</sup>*Lion* was a truly magnificent ship, the largest and fastest capital ship in the world when she was laid down at the end of November 1909, 26,270 tons in load displacement and 700 feet long, she had no less than 42 Yarrow boilers to feed her 70,000 shp turbines and give her a speed of 27 knots. She was launched 6 August 1910 and was commissioned on 4 June 1912.

<sup>3</sup>The officers mentioned were Sub. Lt. Lord Vere Anthony Francis Fane Burghersh and Cdr Lionel Fitzgerald Maitland-Kirwen. Burghersh, a popular officer and leader of wardroom entertainments, became the fourteenth Earl of Westmorland in 1922. Maitland-Kirwen, promoted commander in June 1913, had only been in the ship since March replacing Cdr Carlo Fontaine.

<sup>4</sup>The unfortunate Warrant Officer was Nathaniel Mitchell.

<sup>5</sup>Lt. Cdr Gerald F. Longhurst. He had been appointed gunnery officer of the ship at the beginning of 1914. He was promoted Commander and awarded the DSO after Jutland. He stayed on in *Lion* in 1917 on the BCF Staff under Beatty's successor RA W. C. Pakenham before being transferred to Naval Ordnance Department at the Admiralty in September of that year. His final appointment was as second in command of the armoured cruiser *Carnarvon* on her last commission as a Cadets' training ship, April 1919–June 1921. While in post he died of illness on 8 January 1921.

cordite (ammunition),<sup>1</sup> and he said that it had all been put right and that there would be no difficulty.

I did not say very much on the subject; having been a Gunner and Chief Gunner for nineteen and a half years I have my own views on these things and thought it best to see for myself. These preliminaries over, and with no-one from whom to take over, as my predecessor had been dismissed his ship and therefore no longer belonged to the *Lion*, I made a start to find out things for myself. I therefore got in touch with the Dagger Gunner, Bob Purdie, to take me round the ship and especially the gunnery department.<sup>2</sup> It might be as well to explain the term 'Dagger Gunner'. The science of gunnery was advancing so rapidly that it was considered necessary to have an assistant to the Gunnery Officer to assist him in compiling all the data connected with firing, drills etc. etc. To achieve this, young Gunners of outstanding educational ability were given an advanced course in gunnery and when qualified were termed Dagger Gunner and appointed to ships as such. The first class in this subject started about 1908 and has fully justified itself in many ways. Purdie was a charming fellow, keen on his job and a most delightful shipmate. We had a good tour of the ship which was all I required for my first day on board. In the evening I had the pleasure of meeting Captain Chatfield and handed him a bunch of roses from his garden in the *Excellent* which he had created.<sup>3</sup> The flowers were a gift from Pensioner Hawkins who was

<sup>1</sup>Cordite was a (relatively) smokeless gun propellant patented by Sir Frederick Abel and Sir James Dewar in 1889. It was composed of 58 per cent nitroglycerine, 37 per cent guncotton and 5 per cent petroleum jelly. Using acetone as a solvent it was extruded in cord-like rods, hence its name. Cordite was adopted for British service use in 1891. Because of excessive barrel wear the formula was changed in the early twentieth century to the MD ('modified') variant using 30 per cent nitroglycerine, 65 per cent guncotton and 5 per cent petroleum jelly. During the war because of shortage of acetone an 'RDB' variant was developed using 52 per cent collodion, 42 per cent nitroglycerine and 6 per cent petroleum jelly. This tended to become unstable after long storage.

<sup>2</sup>Gunner Robert Purdie had been with the ship since June 1912.

<sup>3</sup>Capt. Alfred Ernle Montacute Chatfield. Born in 1873 he entered the Royal Navy in 1886 and, after a brilliant career in the junior ranks (culminating in the period as executive officer of the gunnery school at Whale Island mentioned in the introduction) was promoted Captain in 1909. He commanded the battleships *Albemarle* and *London* before commanding the liner *Medina*, commissioned as Royal Yacht for the Indian Durbar in 1911. He became Beatty's flag captain in HMS *Lion* in 1913 and followed Beatty to the Grand Fleet, briefly as captain of the battleship *Iron Duke* and then of *Queen Elizabeth*. Fourth Sea Lord 1919–20, Assistant Chief of Naval Staff 1920–22 and Third Sea Lord 1925–28 he played a vital role in naval policy making. After being C.-in-C. of the Atlantic Fleet 1928–30, and Mediterranean Fleet 1930–32, he became First Sea Lord in January 1933, masterminding naval rearmament until 1938. His last major appointment was Minister for the Co-ordination of Defence 1939–40. The garden at Whale Island is still there, together with a monument to Lord Chatfield, as he later became, regarded by his contemporaries as the greatest Naval officer of his time. He died in 1967.

the rose garden expert. He was delighted with the roses and the thoughtfulness of Hawkins. So finished my first day in the *Lion*.

The Gunner of a ship has at his disposal a number of men known as the Gunner's Party. They vary in number according to the class of ship and are employed in maintaining in an efficient condition all equipment except that which requires the skill of an artificer. This is done by the Armourer, now called the Ordnance Artificer. On the second day, therefore, I took two of my henchmen and made for one of the turret magazines to investigate the cordite problem. It did not take me long to find the pitiful mess it was in. All cordite on manufacture is given a Lot number. Each Lot is sufficient to make up so many cartridges. Each cartridge is marked, also the case containing the cartridge, with the Lot number of the cordite. Periodical tests are made at the Ordnance Laboratories on various lots of cordite. For this purpose sample charges from ships are landed for testing and if they do not come up to the standard required the whole lot is withdrawn and destroyed. It will therefore be seen that care and attention must be taken in the stowage of cordite in the magazine, otherwise confusion and danger may be the result. The cordite for the turret guns was supplied in cylindrical cases, each case containing two quarter charges.<sup>1</sup> There were three markings on the case, one on the case, and one on each of the two lids, therefore the two cartridges and the three markings should all coincide. I found, however, that a large percentage of the cases in all four magazines possessed five different Lot numbers to each case. I spent the whole day in these magazines and at the end I was rather perturbed about it. To put matters right would mean clearing the magazines, sorting out and putting the cordite into the right cases. This could not be done on board a ship. It was too dangerous a proceeding to suggest. Moreover, although a Gunner is responsible for the magazines and their contents, the Gunnery Officer has the supreme responsibility and he had informed me that all was well. I therefore decided to sleep on it and see how the situation could be remedied.

The following day I reported the state of affairs to the Gunnery Officer, who replied: 'Well, you are not going to make a noise about it.' 'That is the last thing I want to do,' was my reply. 'Well, what do you suggest?' 'Give me a boat to take me to the magazine depot at Crombie.'<sup>2</sup> 'What will you do there?' 'I haven't made up my mind yet but you can rest assured I won't do anything that will involve you.' I got a boat at one p.m.

<sup>1</sup>The charges were in silk bags. They were known as 'quarter charges' because a full charge was made up of four. The protective cases were known as 'Clarkson Cases'.

<sup>2</sup>Rosyth's Naval Ordnance Depot on the shores of the Firth of Forth, a prudent distance west of the main base.

and on arriving at Crombie went to the Office and asked to see the Naval Ordnance Officer. The clerk nearly swooned at the suggestion that a Chief Gunner R.N. should see such an august person. 'You can't see the N.O.O. Won't I do?' he said. 'No,' was my reply, 'I want to see the N.O.O.' He brought another official higher up the scale, who said, 'I understand you want to see the N.O.O., can't I do all you want?' In reply to that I brought my guns to bear and told him that the Flag Captain of the *Lion* had sent me to see the N.O.O. and see him I must. That did the trick and I was ushered into his office.<sup>1</sup> There my reception was quite different, I was asked to take a chair and he inquired what he could do for me. I laid all my cards on the table. I told him that the cordite was in an unholy mess, explained just how things were and that the only solution was to change the whole bag-of-tricks, but that the reason of the change must be that there were far too many different Lots of cordite on board. We had thirty-four instead of fifteen. He considered for a while and then said I would have to see your Captain first. 'What would be the best time to see him?' I replied, 'I would suggest your coming on board after eleven tomorrow morning,' and this was agreed. I returned on board feeling very pleased with my visit and had the feeling that my shots went home in the right direction. The Gunnery Officer was waiting for me at the top of the gangway very anxious to know how I had got on. When I told him that the N.O.O. was coming on board tomorrow morning to see the Captain about changing all our cordite due to the fact that we had too many different Lots on board, and that no mention would be made of the state it was in, he was very much relieved. So was I, for I liked Longhurst from the first meeting and was sorry that he had been let down so badly.

On the following day the N.O.O. arrived on board. I stood by in case I was required. Sure enough a messenger came along to say the Captain wanted me. On reporting, he said (with that quiet smile which meant, 'I know'), 'The N.O.O. tells me we have too many different cordite Lots on board and wants to give us a new outfit. How long do you think it would take to do this?' 'If the N.O.O. can give us eight lighters, four with the new outfit, and four empty to take the old, we can do the whole shift in four hours, and at no time will the ship be without its full quota of cordite.' The N.O.O. agreed to the lighters and the Captain decided to carry out the programme. Two days later at eight in the morning the eight lighters came alongside. Full ones on one side, empty ones on the other. We first cleared one bay in each of the four magazines after which, as one hoist of old cordite came up we lowered a hoist of the new and by noon the whole operation was completed. We were then able to distribute each Lot

<sup>1</sup>The NOO was Naval Ordnance Store Officer J. Gledhill.

equally between the four magazines thus enabling us to fire the same Lot of cordite from all turret guns at the same time. By this method, so I believed, and still maintain, the accuracy of shooting is improved – a most important factor in war.<sup>1</sup>

With the introduction of cordite to replace powder for firing guns, the regulations regarding the necessary precautions for handling explosives became unconsciously considerably relaxed, even I regret to say, to a dangerous degree throughout the Service. Yet for entry to any of the magazines on shore where naval explosives were stored, you would find the regulations just as strict as they were in the days of powder charges. All pipes, cigarettes, matches, or anything else capable of ignition had to be deposited with the police. Magazine shoes had to be worn. If these precautions were considered necessary on shore they were equally essential on board ship. The gradual lapse in the regulations on board ship seemed to be due to two factors. First, cordite is a much safer explosive to handle than gun-powder. Second, but more important, the altered construction of magazines on board led to a feeling of false security. When powder was in use all magazines were lined with wood and secured with copper nails or bolts, the deck was of wood, the tackle for transport was fitted with metal hooks. Not a scrap of iron or steel which might cause a spark was used. The decks of the passages or handing room adjoining were covered with lead. The manholes or scuttles on the various decks, through which the cartridges had to pass from magazines to gun, were all fitted with metal. Every conceivable precaution was taken where powder was in transit, and no-one was allowed in a magazine unless he had on the special shoes provided for this purpose. With the introduction of cordite there came in time a considerable alteration in the construction of magazines. The iron or steel deck, the disappearance of the wood lining, the electric lights fitted inside, the steel doors, open because there was now no chute for passing cartridges out, all this gave officers and men a comparative easiness of mind regarding the precautions necessary with explosive material. Two illustrations confirm this. Magazines when not in use are locked. The keys are kept on a board outside the Captain's cabin, where a sentry is always posted. There is also a small shutter fitted which indicates magazines closed or open. One day I happened to be passing and noticed that the magazine was shown as open. On asking the sentry how the indicator came to be in the open position, he informed me that a stoker came for the key of one of the turret magazines. 'Do you give keys of magazines to anyone who may ask for them?' 'Yes, sir,' was his

<sup>1</sup>Similar problems were faced by the US Navy when its battleships were reactivated in the 1980s. After the ships had experienced erratic shooting, the old propellant had to be remixed for the consistency required for accurate, long-range fire.

reply. 'I have no orders to the contrary.' I then made for the magazine in question and found two stokers lubricating certain valves. They both had hob-nailed boots on, matches in their pockets, and cigarettes stuck behind their ears. They may have been smoking them for all I know. I ordered them out of the magazine and locked the door. Shortly afterwards, I received a message to say that the Senior Engineer Officer wished to see me.<sup>1</sup> He wanted to know why I was interfering with his men. I told him the reason and that as long as I was Gunner of the ship no-one would enter a magazine without my knowledge. He said that he would see the Commander. Whether he did or not, I do not know, but the sentry's order board was soon amended regarding the issuing of magazine keys.

The other illustration is far more convincing. As is well known, the *Lion*, with the other battle cruisers was engaged in the Heligoland Bight and Dogger Bank actions.<sup>2</sup> It was only natural that I heard many points of view of these actions from officers and men, which prompted me to ask many questions, especially regarding the supply of ammunition. In this I was very much concerned, having come to the conclusion that the method of supplying the turret guns with cordite during these two actions were dangerous. Each turret had four magazines with a watertight door to each, containing in all two hundred full charges of cordite stowed in four hundred cases. There was a circular apartment outside these magazines, called the handing room, fitted with a circular trunk in the centre which received the cartridge for passage up to the loading chamber of the turret. The magazine crew, full of enthusiasm and determined that the guns should not have to wait for cordite, had removed practically every lid from all the cases, piling up the handing room with charges. In addition they filled the narrow passage in the four magazines with more charges. I can picture the crews, having made all these preparations, sitting down contentedly saying to each other, 'Now let them all come. We will let them know how to let them have it good and hearty.' Little did they realise the extreme danger they were placing the ship in by their preparations. In these two actions, and especially at the Dogger Bank,

<sup>1</sup>Engineer Cdr Mark Rundle. He had been in the ship since commissioning in June 1912.

<sup>2</sup>The Battle of the Heligoland Bight took place on 28 August 1914. Beatty's battle cruisers supported a raid by the Harwich Force of light cruisers and destroyers. The Germans lost three light cruisers and a destroyer, two of the cruisers to Beatty's heavy guns. No British ships were sunk. Much was made of the victory, but the engagement was marred by confusion on the British side. The Dogger Bank engagement took place on 24 January 1915 between Beatty with five British battle cruisers and the German First Scouting Group with four ships, three battle cruisers and the armoured cruiser *Blucher*. Thanks to a British signalling failure only *Blucher* was sunk and the German battle cruisers escaped. *Lion* suffered heavy damage and Beatty considered the battle a failure.

fire was opened at extreme range on both sides.<sup>1</sup> This meant that the danger area was very small and a shell finding its mark did so at an acute angle and with every prospect of its reaching the bowels of the ship before explosion took place; and our ship, although heavily armoured on the side, had only comparatively light deck protection.<sup>2</sup>

I brought all this to the notice of the Gunnery Officer and suggested drastic alterations in the supply of cordite. These were (1) One magazine only to be in use during action.<sup>3</sup> (2) Not more than one full charge to be in the handing room.<sup>4</sup> (3) Charges to be taken out of their cases only as required.<sup>5</sup> (4) Crews not to wear boots or shoes. (5) During any lull in the demand for charges the magazine door to be closed and watertight clips put on. (6) On no account should the magazines be flooded except on receipt of an order from a responsible officer. The Gunnery Officer said he would consider the proposals and consult the officers in charge of turrets. These were all against the alterations; their view was that there would be delay.<sup>6</sup> My reply was 'Give me the magazine crews to train and test the time.' The new arrangements proved that supply was faster than the guns could take it.<sup>7</sup> The Captain was informed and came down to witness personally and to approve the whole scheme. Remarks were made about the antiquated idea of making the men remove their boots or shoes. To prove the necessity of this being done, the magazine deck was swept after an exercise. The sweepings were taken on to the upper deck and laid out in a trail. When a lighted match was put to one end of the trail the whole went up in smoke. All cordite charges are filled at each end with a small amount of fine powder.<sup>8</sup> Some of this powder percolates through its covering, hence the powder contained in the sweepings.

<sup>1</sup>In fact, in the Heligoland Bight battle the range was close (5,000 yards) because of mist. At Dogger Bank the ranges were indeed long, *Lion's* shortest recorded range was 14,825 yards. See J. Brooks, *Dreadnought Gunnery and the Battle of Jutland* (London and New York, 2005), pp. 217–21.

<sup>2</sup>*Lion* had 9-in belt armour as opposed to 12-in for a contemporary battleship; deck armour was the same maximum thickness in both types, 2.5 in.

<sup>3</sup>'Only' was between 'use' and 'during' in original; moved in interests of clarity.

<sup>4</sup>This seems to be in addition to charges in the two handing room ammunition hoppers.

<sup>5</sup>'Only' added between 'cases' and 'as' to clarify meaning.

<sup>6</sup>The turret commanders included Major Francis John William Harvey RMLI of 'Q' turret, the officer who would later be awarded the Victoria Cross for saving the ship. The Royal Marines were notorious for their tendency to extreme measures to increase rate of fire.

<sup>7</sup>This was important as contemporary doctrine emphasised rapid fire (one salvo every 25–30 seconds in a 13.5-in ship) once the range was obtained by straddling. Rapid fire had been emphasised by Jellicoe in early 1915 after Dogger Bank and enthusiastically adopted by the Battle Cruiser Fleet. See Lambert, 'Our Bloody Ships', pp. 39–42.

<sup>8</sup>Sentence altered to 'each' end, as was the case at this time. Each igniter contained 16 ounces of fine grain black powder. Single igniters under protective covers were introduced after Jutland to reduce the risk of explosion.

The *Lion* was, what is called in the service, a 'West Country Ship.' That is to say she was manned with men belonging to the Devonport Division.<sup>1</sup> The Warrant Officers also are taken from the same Division as the men. I found myself therefore a stranger in a strange ship never having been in a West Country Ship other than the Training Ship *Lion* as a boy.<sup>2</sup> Moreover I was the senior member of the Mess and therefore responsible for its discipline and the well-being of its members. The Mess was constructed to accommodate twelve, yet we had twenty-three including three Telegraphists from the G.P.O. at Edinburgh. It was therefore overcrowded to such an extent that meals had to be served in relays, which was most unsatisfactory. The Squadron was generally 'at short notice' and what leave was given was a few hours in the afternoon when conditions enabled this to be done. It did not take long to realise how my messmates had been living during the past ten months. They were cooped up in this small square box with precious little room to move; having meals in relays, unable to invite any brother officers from other ships. Cabin accommodation was only available for eight, the remainder had to use hammocks. Such a state of affairs soon gets on one's nerves and seriously undermines good comradeship, and even discipline. I therefore decided on a Mess Meeting so that we could have a free and frank discussion on general mess matters. One outcome of this was that we were able to squeeze another table into the Mess whereby we could all have our meals together. It was also decided that as we could not have any other officer as a guest, owing to lack of room, we would have a sing-song once a month and invite four Warrant Officers from three other ships to come and join us. To do this we cleared the Mess and had a buffet for eats and drinks. I had to approach the Commander for permission to have extra wines and spirits. He seemed rather doubtful and said he would speak to the Captain. I assured him there would be no unnecessary consumption. Later he informed me that the Captain approved. The Gun Room kindly lent us their piano. Our first party was a huge success. One of our messmates was an expert pianist, so with songs, stories and refreshments, we had a real rollicking time and best of all we infused new life into the Mess by creating a most pleasant and healthy atmosphere to replace the jaded strain. Credit for this was due to our Chief Carpenter, Mr Dailey,<sup>3</sup> our Dagger Gunner, and the Pianist.

<sup>1</sup>That is, her commissioning port was Devonport, as opposed to Portsmouth or Chatham.

<sup>2</sup>The 80-gun Second Rate ship of the line *Lion* had been launched in 1847 and converted to steam in 1859. She became a static training ship in 1871. See the introduction for Grant's training in her.

<sup>3</sup>Not 'Bailey' as in the original. Chief Carpenter Frederick E. Dailey was an experienced warrant officer with seniority of 1 June 1904. He had been in the ship since her construction.

The success of our party was the forerunner of many more that took place. It also caused the Warrant Officers in other ships of the Squadron to go and do likewise whereby we were their guests. In time we invited our Ward Room Officers to come and join us. This was reciprocated. Being a Scot, I suggested to the Mess that we should hold a Hogmanay party and invite the whole of the Ward Room Officers. This was agreed upon. The Ward Room was so delighted with the invitation that they offered us the use of the Ward Room for the occasion, in view of the cramped space available in our Mess. It was a fine gesture on their part and I am doubtful if any such thing has happened before or since. What a party it was, with songs, choruses, stories and jokes, with the inner man not being neglected. About 11.30 the signalman came into the Mess with the half-yearly promotions. As I was principal host, the Commander gave me the honour of reading them out. I had not got very far down the list when I could see signs of restlessness, the reason being that there were two schools of thought. One backed the Torpedo Officer, the other the Gunnery Officer, for promotion to Commander. The Torpedo Officer won the Derby and was now a Commander.<sup>1</sup> There were looks of disappointment on the faces of Guns' supporters. I cheered them up by saying 'It's alright, I have never yet served under a Gunnery Officer who did not get his promotion and I am jolly certain never shall, and we will see our Guns promoted yet.'<sup>2</sup> At midnight we said goodbye to 1915 in real Scottish style and then adjourned to the Gun Room where the midshipmen were having a party with the Flag Captain<sup>3</sup> as their guest. Before leaving the social activities of the *Lion*, I must say that one could not wish to be with better messmates. They needed a lead to rise to the occasion and thereby derived considerable benefit in those stirring and trying days.

<sup>1</sup>Grant's memory is playing him false here. The officer in question was the only Lieutenant Commander other than Longhurst in the ship, Francis Henry Brabant. According to the Navy List, he does not seem to have been a torpedo specialist but his seniority as Commander was certainly 31/12/15. *Lion's* specialist torpedo officer, who also looked after the ship's electrics, was Cdr Evan C. Bunbury. As an important capital unit and flagship, *Lion* rated full commanders as navigating and torpedo officers. As a Commander, Brabant was appointed as executive officer of the light cruiser *Gloucester* in March 1916 but because of a serious asthma attack was moved to the depot ship *Greenwich*. In 1917 he was appointed to the armoured cruiser *Bacchante*, flagship of the 9th Cruiser Squadron at Gibraltar. After the war he helped administer the Nore Reserve before being lent to the Royal Canadian Navy. He was put on the retired list as a Captain on 12 November 1927.

<sup>2</sup>Longhurst was indeed promoted after Jutland, seniority 30/6/16, see below.

<sup>3</sup>Chatfield; despite a rather quiet and austere image, 'Chatty', as he had been nicknamed rather ironically as a junior officer, enjoyed a whisky and soda and could be excellent company.

The Battle Cruiser Squadron was a strong striking force.<sup>1</sup> It had the speed and the gun power to give a powerful account of itself in action. With Admiral Beatty in command everyone knew that when the day came, as come it must, (for the nation commanding the sea also had victory in the hollow of its hand) the Battle Cruisers would be in the front and the thickest of the fight. There is no doubt that Beatty, like Nelson before him, had endeared himself to his Officers and men. The war had now been waging for over eighteen months. There had yet been no action at sea of any magnitude. The enemy had a powerful and efficient Fleet. The days of close blockade had gone. The tip and run raids by the enemy had two purposes, one was to endeavour to annihilate any small force we might have at sea and so reduce our strength piecemeal. The other was to cause panic among our folk on shore. Our Commander-in-Chief, Admiral Jellicoe, and Admirals in charge of squadrons were too seasoned seamen to run into such a trap. Nevertheless it was a trying time with so many officers and men cooped up for months in confined quarters. The occasions when leave could be given were few and far between. Long leave to visit homes was out of the question except when a ship was in dock, and then it was four days only. It was difficult to overcome the monotony of the daily routine of drill and inspection of equipment. More especially was this so in the Engineering and Gunnery Departments where so much depended on a ceaseless attention to detail. I consider the Gunnery Officer had the most difficult part to play during those months of waiting. The constant drilling of guns' crews so as to keep them up to the standard required was one needing real patience and understanding. Then there were all the intricate appliances, some of them most delicate, requiring most careful maintenance. It was always a relief when one observed smoke belching forth from the funnels of the Squadron. This meant we were on the move. Presently anchors would be weighed and these lovely ships would be sneaking out to sea, few knowing whither bound. At times no doubt we went in search of the enemy. At others we had a rendezvous with the Grand Fleet at sea for a sweep of the enemy coast. These trips occurred frequently and generally lasted three or four days. On our return to Harbour, colliers came alongside immediately and we would have to get in a thousand tons of coal or more, seldom less. It's a great game, coaling ship. Keen competition between ships and also between the men in each ship was always evident. Everyone took part,

<sup>1</sup> It had been redesignated 'Battle Cruiser Fleet' (BCF) in February 1915 as it was by then composed of three Battle Cruiser Squadrons, each of three ships (1st with *Queen Mary*, *Princess Royal* and *Tiger*; 2nd with *Indefatigable*, *Australia* and *New Zealand*; and 3rd with *Invincible*, *Indomitable* and *Inflexible*; *Lion* as flagship made the BCF ten battle cruisers in all).

except the doctors and their staff. Our Chaplain<sup>1</sup> was a rare hand at hauling bags of coal. We would fill bags in the collier, hoist them inboard and empty them into the various bunkers at the rate of two hundred tons an hour. Provisions would also come alongside and in a few hours the Squadron was again ready to proceed to sea when required.

The *Lion* had to go into dock to have the ship's bottom scraped and painted. It is astonishing how quickly seaweed clings to a ship's bottom and thereby retards its speed. The dock selected was the floating dock at Jarrow-on-Tyne. Alterations were also to be carried out in the vicinity of the turret magazines which necessitated the landing of our cordite before sailing. I mention this docking because it was the occasion of a fine piece of carefully planned organisation. Everyone in the ship was to have four days leave, except three officers, the Torpedo Officer, Senior Engineer, and myself, together with a small number of ratings, about twenty all told. It was mid-winter and the ship entered the dock about seven in the morning. Lifting the ship commenced immediately, at nine the ship was docked and Liberty Men were piped to clean. At ten a.m., when all the pubs were closed, tugs came alongside and everyone landed. Special trains were waiting to take men to the principal destinations. The special trains were due back on the fourth day at 10.30, again after closing time. Tugs conveyed everyone to the ship and the following morning at seven-thirty we were heading down the river bound for our base on the Forth. It was, to me at any rate, a fine piece of work, well executed with everyone playing the game. There was not one absentee out of the twelve hundred on board, and many of these could not have had more than forty-eight hours with their loved ones at home.

During our four days stay at Jarrow, a tragedy happened to one of our men. The Captain had given orders that none of the ship-keeping party was to have any leave at Jarrow. It appeared, however, that when the ship was at Jarrow for repairs after the Dogger Bank action,<sup>2</sup> three of the men, Chief Petty Officers, had made friends on shore. On the second night in dock they requested leave to go on shore until ten p.m. The Torpedo

<sup>1</sup>The Revd Cecil W. Lydall MA.

<sup>2</sup>*Lion* had been quite badly damaged at the Dogger Bank suffering 18 major shell hits. She suffered considerable flooding and had to be towed home as her propulsion plant was put out of action. Admiral Lord Fisher as First Sea Lord would not allow a proper docking as he wished to hide the damage *Lion* had sustained. As Chatfield later put it, 'He ordered her to go to the Tyne and be repaired without docking. It was a bad decision. We spent nearly four months in the Tyne with the ship permanently heeled over, while the bottom was repaired by means of vast wooden coffer dams' (*The Navy and Defence*, p. 136). According to N. J. M. Campbell, *Battle Cruisers* (Greenwich, 1978), p. 30, the repair work took only from 9 February to 28 March, the work being carried out by Palmers, but it clearly seemed a lot longer to Chatfield!

Officer,<sup>1</sup> who was responsible, thought that as the request was from three Chief Petty Officers, it was rather hard if they could not see their friends, and he granted their request. At ten o'clock I reported that they had not returned. About eleven Water Police came on board with one of our men and reported that the other two had fallen overboard and were in a serious condition. I was immediately sent on shore with the sick berth steward armed with blankets and hot water bottles for it was a cold, icy night with a strong, easterly wind. On arrival at the Police Station I found the men lying on two forms placed V shape in front of a roaring fire, with the cold, icy wind blowing into the room. They still had their wet clothes on and were being roasted on one side and frozen on the other and in agonies of pain. I immediately sent for a doctor, stripped them of their clothes to make them comfortable, sent for an ambulance and called up the hospital to arrange for their reception. When the doctor arrived his first words were 'Get an ambulance as quickly as possible.' I informed him that one was ordered and he was most grateful. I shall ever remember the drive through the streets of Jarrow on that cold, black, wintry night. One of them died, and the other was ill for a long time as a result of immersion. It appeared that ice had formed on the stone steps leading to the boat, which caused them to slip and fall into the water, and the water of the Tyne in that neighbourhood is not what could be called crystal or pure.

On certain occasions leave was given in the afternoon for officers to go as far as Edinburgh. We landed at one o'clock and all leave expired at six. Whilst in Edinburgh we had to contact certain places every two hours in case of a general recall. One afternoon, whilst in Edinburgh I decided to return to Queensferry about four o'clock to pay a call on friends of mine. At the station I went to the usual platform and asked a porter if the train stopped at Dalmeny. Being assured that it did, I got in. As we approached Dalmeny there was no sign of speed being reduced and we steamed past the station at forty miles per hour over the Forth Bridge, past North Queensferry, and through the tunnel. My fellow passengers told me the first stop was Kirkcaldy. At that I felt all at sixes and sevens and never dreamed of pulling the communication cord. Fortunately for me the signals were against the train at Inverkeithing and it came to a standstill. Out I jumped and made for the bridge, I dare not go through the tunnel so climbed up the rocky ground over the tunnel and on to the bridge. There the sentry stopped me. When he heard my predicament he allowed me to pass. Hard pressed for time, I had to perform an *Excellent* double most of the way, arriving at Hawes Pier with a bare minute to spare. I have never trusted a railway porter at any main station since that day.

<sup>1</sup>Cdr Bunbury, see note 1 on p. 392.

On the twenty-ninth of May 1916, the officers of the *Queen Mary* were giving a farewell At Home to their commander, now Admiral Sir William James on his leaving the ship.<sup>1</sup> Having known Commander James in *Excellent* days, I took the opportunity of attending so as to be able to say goodbye. Little did I or anyone else realise that evening that in less than forty-eight hours the *Queen Mary* with practically the whole of her officers and men would be at the bottom of the sea. On the following forenoon I went to Edinburgh, and when I reached the Hawes Pier at six, smoke was pouring from the funnels of the Squadron. This was a pure sign of going to sea. Two hours later, the Squadron, with its attending Light Cruisers and Destroyers, was steaming out of the Firth making for the North Sea. As we were passing under the Bridge I happened to be in conversation with the Major of Marines,<sup>2</sup> and in the course of it he remarked that we have left our cat behind and he didn't like it. I thought nothing of it at the time, but often since thought that he must have had a premonition that something was going to happen to him. On the following afternoon the usual routine was carried out of exercising action stations, and testing all equipment. When at sea no drill or work was carried out in the afternoon. The Captain's orders were that except for those required for duty everyone should rest so that in case of an evening or night action men would be more fit to endure fatigue.

About three-thirty in the afternoon, as the men were thinking about their seven beller (the navy term for afternoon tea) the bugler sounded 'ACTION'. This meant that the enemy, for which we had searched so many times, had been sighted. The constant drill and exercises, so assiduously carried out since the declaration of war, was now going to be put to the test. It is only a matter of a few minutes from the time 'ACTION' is sounded on the bugle before everyone is at his appointed place. Guns are cleared away, magazine and shell rooms opened, ammunition passed up to the guns. Fire, stretcher, repair, alternative lighting, and other parties are all at their appointed places. On this occasion, as always, everyone knew exactly what he had to do and did it without any fuss or bother. With everything ready to open fire, it appeared that it would be some time before we were within range. Orders were received to allow so many men

<sup>1</sup>'Bubbles' James (1881–1973), so nicknamed for his appearance as a boy in a famous soap advertisement, was destined for a most distinguished career in the service. Chatfield, with whom he served as Chief of Staff when Fleet C.-in-C. and as Deputy Chief of Naval Staff when First Sea Lord, considered him to be an officer 'possessed of high ability' (*Navy and Defence*, p. 218). James was C.-in-C. Portsmouth 1939–42 when Grant was in command of *Victory*. He was replaced in the doomed *Queen Mary* by Cdr Sir Charles R. Blane (Bart.) who went down with the ship.

<sup>2</sup>Major Harvey; see note 6 on p. 390.

to have tea in turn. Before this could be completed 'ACTION' was sounded again, and in less than a minute the *Lion* fired her first broadside and the Battle of Jutland had begun.<sup>1</sup>

As I am writing only of my memories the reader will not expect an account of all that happened in this, to my mind, decisive action. Granted the enemy were not annihilated as at Trafalgar. They, however, received a far worse battering than was credited at the time, and because of it surrendered ignominiously at a subsequent date.<sup>2</sup> The Battle of Jutland has been described many times by far abler men than I and controversy has ranged around these writings. I can, however, give an account of some of the happenings on board the *Lion*. The civilian sometimes has an idea that because a man takes part in a battle, he must have seen everything that was taking place. Shells hurtling through the air, ships blown to pieces, destroyers attacking with torpedoes, squadrons of ships steaming at full speed to cut off the retreat of the enemy. It is perfectly true that many officers and men in Light cruisers and Destroyers do see what is taking place due to the guns being hand-worked with little or no protection. Whereas in large ships, where guns are worked by power, everyone is below decks except those on the bridge and control tops at the mast head. Even the men who man and load the guns cannot see the ships they are firing at.

I had no special duty in action. To use a naval phrase I had a roving commission, to be here, there and everywhere. My first concern, however, was the supply of ammunition to the turret guns, as the new supply method was being used and therefore I wanted to see it applied in its entirety. There were four turrets named A, B, Q and X. Each one had four separate magazines. As soon as fire had opened I made for A and B magazines. They were in the fore part of the ship and in close proximity to each other. I found everything quite satisfactory, no delay, only one door opened, and not more than one full charge in the handing room. The supply was meeting the demand. I left orders that if there was a lull in the firing, the party must not forget to close the door of the magazine in use.

<sup>1</sup>*Lion* opened fire half a minute after 15.47. The enemy was 42 degrees on the port bow and thus (contrary to some reports) all the battle cruiser's turrets were bearing. *Lion* was not firing 'broadside' but four-gun salvos, one gun from each turret in turn. After some delay Chatfield had given the order to fire as Beatty and his staff were preoccupied with other matters (see *The Navy and Defence*, p. 141: 'I could wait no longer and told Longhurst to open fire').

<sup>2</sup>A somewhat optimistic, if understandable, assessment. Damage to the High Sea Fleet was indeed heavy but only two major units, a battle cruiser and a pre-dreadnought battleship, were sunk. A much relieved German fleet commander reported to the Kaiser that the 'High Sea Fleet will be ready by the middle of August for further strikes against the enemy' (quoted Marder, *From the Dreadnought to Scapa Flow*, p. 206), which it was.

'Aye, aye, sir,' was the reply. The men were in real good fettle. I then made for Q which was in the centre of the ship. To reach it entailed a climb up Jacob's Ladder on to the mess deck and a walk aft. En route I had to pass several parties at their allotted stations. 'How is it going on, sir?' they asked. 'Alright,' I would reply, 'the Admiral is on the bridge.' 'That's good' they would say. To get to Q one had to descend to a small flat where a first aid and electric light party was stationed, and then down into the handing room. Here everyone was standing about in silence. The magazine door was closed, in fact they all seemed stupefied. When I asked what was the matter, the Sergeant in charge said that something had gone wrong in the turret and that the Major in charge of the turret had ordered the magazine to be flooded. I inquired how long the valves for flooding had been opened, and when I learned that they had been opened some time I was convinced that the magazine was now completely flooded.<sup>1</sup> It was also reported that the supply cages were full. It would therefore appear that there was outside the magazine at least two full charges in the supply cages and there may have been two more in the loading cages in the working chamber which was immediately under the guns.<sup>2</sup> While I was making these inquiries, men from the working chamber were coming down the trunk into the handing room. I asked them what had happened and they informed me that a shell had pierced the turret, exploding inside, killing the gun's crew, and that the turret was completely out of action. Q turret was manned by the Royal Marines, with Major Harvey in charge. Major Harvey, although lying mortally wounded, to his everlasting glory thought of the safety of the ship and ordered the magazines to be flooded.

<sup>1</sup>This account differs from contemporary official reports that I used in my *Fleet to Fleet Encounters* (London, 1991). These give the impression, which Mr Geddes told me was family legend, that it was Grant who gave the actual direct order to flood. It is possible that Grant, always loyal, thought it best to give Harvey, one of the public heroes of the battle and a dead shipmate, due credit. On the other hand, Grant's account is clear and is strong evidence that Harvey's VC was well earned. Chatfield, acting independently, also ordered the flooding of the magazine when he saw that Q turret had been hit (*The Navy and Defence*, p. 142: 'but my order had been forestalled by Major Harvey'). According to *Technical History And Index CB 1515(24)*, *Storage and Handling of Explosives*, dated October 1919 (Copy in the Naval Historical Branch, Portsmouth) Harvey 'ordered magazine doors to be closed'. Only one would have been open according to Grant's instructions. Closing the one open door was, in any case, a necessary part of magazine flooding.

<sup>2</sup>According to Campbell's account (*Battle Cruisers*, p. 30) based on contemporary gunnery records there were in fact eight full charges, 32 bags in all, outside the magazine, one stuck in the right loading cage four feet above the working chamber on its way for the next salvo, one in the left cage actually in the working chamber under the turret, two in the waiting positions in the working chamber, two in the lower hoist cages that were in the down position and two in both magazine hoppers in the handing room. There was no extra cordite.

For this gallant deed in safeguarding the ship he was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross.<sup>1</sup>

I thought at first of going up the trunk to see at first hand what had happened. The turret was out of action, however, and as I had not yet been to X magazine I decided to go there, first ordering the men who came from the working chamber to go up into the flat above as the handing room was overcrowded. I have ever regretted not going up into the disabled turret as a subsequent disaster might, or might not, have been averted. In X magazine everything appeared to be in order. There was a lull in the firing at the time so the door was closed with no charges in the handing room.<sup>2</sup> I did not stay very long, feeling rather uneasy about the flooded magazine of Q, and made to that place again. I had reached the hatchway leading to the flat above the magazine and by the providence of God had only one foot on the step of the Jacob's Ladder, when suddenly there was a terrific roar, followed by flame and dense smoke.<sup>3</sup> Had I been a few seconds earlier and thus further down the Ladder, I would have met the same fate as all those fine men below who were burned to death. I instantly ran into the next compartment thinking the end had come. I regained my breath and self-possession and immediately went back to the hatchway and down to the bottom of the ladder. I could not get any further for smoke and fumes of cordite and scorched paint. Gas masks of those days were rather primitive and it was found that they were no use in this atmosphere. Numbers of my shipmates were either in their last agonies or already dead. I could see there was no fire and as soon as we got below endeavoured with the help of other men to rescue any who might be alive. We hauled up a few through the small hatchway but by this time all hope of saving life was gone.

<sup>1</sup>He was terribly badly burned but did not, as some more lurid accounts have it, have his legs blown off. Eye-witness accounts say the Major's body was intact when it was taken out of the turret.

<sup>2</sup>Grant probably means there were no other charges lying around outside the handing room hoppers, as there were in other ships. Neither were there extra charges being stored in the turrets. Lambert points out that it was common to keep 12 charges ready in the turrets of other British ships. *Indefatigable*, the first battle cruiser to blow up, had extra, ready to use cordite lockers in her working chambers that would have increased that number still further. Given charges stored dangerously in the handing chambers, 'There could easily have been ... as many as twenty-five, thirty or even forty charges exposed to flash. The ignition of (say) twenty five charges (just under three tons of propellant) would have produced more than just a flash fire; probably the result would be an explosion sufficient to sink the ship (Lambert, 'Our Bloody Ships', p. 55). Thanks to Grant, there were only eight charges exposed to ignition.

<sup>3</sup>All the charges outside the magazine had caught fire and exploded (or, more accurately for a slow explosive like cordite, deflagrated). That these were not powerful enough to take the ship with them vindicated Grant and his measures.

I consider that the cause of this tragedy was that early in the action, an enemy shell, by a thousand chances to one, struck the armoured turret where the two guns protrude, exploded and so lifted one of the armoured plates clean off the turret.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, the force of explosion apparently killed or mortally wounded all those in the gun position and played havoc with the hydraulic machinery, thus putting the turret out of action. It was when this happened that Major Harvey gave the order to flood magazines. Some time had therefore elapsed between the time the turret was placed out of action and the explosion. There are two theories as to the cause of this explosion. The first is that a second enemy shell entered and exploded in the turret, thus causing a fire. With part of the roof open, the draught caused by the speed of the ship would be forced down through the turret, resulting in the flame igniting the cordite which would be in the gun-loading cages. This in turn must have ignited the cordite in the supply trunk which certainly contained two full charges, and being in a confined space, the gases concentrated there exploded. According to the second theory, a fire may have been caused by the first shell that put the turret out of action. If so, then the strong draught of air being forced down ignited the cordite in the gun-loading cages and supply trunk. It is this second theory that has always made me regret not going up into the turret to see that no fire was about.<sup>2</sup> It was by the providence of God that the hatchway leading from the flat to the magazine handing room was open. This opening formed a vent through which the gases set up by the ignition of the cordite could escape.<sup>3</sup> As it was, the bulkheads of the magazine were found to be saucer-shaped on examination from the force of the explosion. It is difficult to say what might have happened had the hatchway been closed, or charges of cordite been left in the handing room at the time of flooding. As it was, the grim fact remained that over

<sup>1</sup>At 1600 a 12-in base fused semi-armour piercing explosive shell from the German First Scouting Group flagship *Lutzow* (26,318 tons, eight 12-in guns, commissioned March 1916) had hit the turret at a weak point at the right corner of the left gun position where the 9-in frontal armour met the 3.5-in roof protection. The shell penetrated the turret, carrying armour with it, and burst about three feet from impact over the left gun. The front roof plate and centre face plate were both blown off (Campbell, *Battle Cruisers*, p. 30). No cordite appears to have been set off by the initial explosion. The loading cages were too far away and there was no extra cordite being stored in the gun house.

<sup>2</sup>Grant's second theory was the more accurate. It seems the fire was carried down to the cordite by the flammable coverings of the electric cables. There was no second hit on the turret. As Chatfield explained in *The Navy and Defence* (p. 151), 'there must have been a good deal of smouldering material, which needed only a draught of air to burst into flame. The air current was provided when the battle cruisers altered course 180 degrees to the northward, bringing what wind there was ahead.' This would put the fire shortly after 1640 as the battle cruisers turned to draw the High Sea Fleet onto the Grand Fleet's guns.

<sup>3</sup>The fire also vented through the open turret roof producing 'a flame shooting up as high as the masthead' (Chatfield, *The Navy and Defence*, p. 151).

sixty of my shipmates lost their lives in tragic circumstances without an opportunity of escape.

When I was satisfied there was no more danger of fire in the vicinity of Q magazine, I reported to the bridge through the transmission station, for the information of the Captain. During the action the ship received several hits. Some of these passed through the ship in a most erratic way, others exploded causing casualties and fire, which were promptly dealt with. One large shell landed on the upper deck, close to our foremost funnel, failed to explode, and was subsequently rolled overboard as it was considered dangerous should the ship again be engaged. As I performed this operation I thought wistfully what a trophy it would have made for *Excellent*.

I do consider that for men in big ships a sea engagement is a particularly trying experience. There they are cramped and confined down below in so many small compartments, with no certain knowledge of events. If they have to work to occupy their minds they are fortunate, but in such a well organised community many have not much to do during the actual battle. They listen to the thud of one enemy shell and the explosion of another. This unavoidable lack of occupation, together with the rumours that get about (and they certainly do get about), to the effect that some ship has been blown to pieces, is more than enough to arouse uneasiness in their minds. It is the bounden duty of all those in authority to dispel these rumours, even if they know them to be true, and so keep up the men's spirits to the job in hand, the annihilation of the enemy.

In due course, owing to the manoeuvring of the enemy, our squadron's firing ceased. It again opened up round about nine o'clock for a short period.<sup>1</sup> Visibility then became very poor and firing ceased altogether. Orders were given that everyone had to remain at his station during the night, as it was expected that a night action might take place, and that at any rate we must be prepared to meet the enemy at dawn. Meals had to be taken in relays. During the night we pumped the water out of Q Magazine and attended to many things in readiness to meet the enemy again, and, as I fervently hoped, add another glorious First of June to the annals of our service. This action, as everyone knows, did not materialise. The enemy escaped to his Base, and we had no choice but to make reluctantly for the Forth. During the forenoon, I had to supervise the removal of the dead from Q turret handing room and the flat above. They were all carried reverently to the Quarter Deck, and in the afternoon, our Admiral, officers and men assembled to pay homage to their shipmates who had made the

<sup>1</sup>The BCF fought a brief but sharp action with the retreating German fleet between 2018 and 2036.

supreme sacrifice. The Captain read the service (our Chaplain being amongst the dead), after which their bodies were committed to the deep.<sup>1</sup> On the following forenoon we anchored in the Forth. The wounded were landed. Colliers and ammunition lighters came alongside and in less than twenty-four hours the squadron was ready to put to sea.

The foregoing is a personal account of what I saw and did at the Battle of Jutland. In making out my report at the Captain's request, I wrote of what I had seen others doing, and left out myself and doings, as I considered I had only done my duty in the light of my twenty years' experience as a Gunner. At the same time I had the feeling that, had the same method of ammunition supply to the turrets been in operation at Jutland as in the two previous actions in which the ship was engaged, then much more serious damage, if not complete destruction, would have been sustained. I am still quite certain of that. My considered opinion is that the magazine crew would have heard the shell exploding in the turret, immediately followed by the cessation of supply, and the order to flood the magazine. The suddenness of all this so early in the action must have caused a certain amount of consternation with the men below. The hurry of closing and making watertight the four magazine doors, would in all probability have caused the men to overlook the cartridges lying in the handing room, and if so these would also have exploded in the tremendous explosion that took place about twenty or thirty minutes later.

On the day following our return to Harbour, Admiral Beatty gave a most stirring address to all officers and men. He first told us that he had just returned from visiting the wounded and that they were all very comfortable and cheerful. He then went on to say that despite our serious losses, the enemy had received far more at our hands than had been credited to us, a fact which was abundantly proved at a later date.<sup>2</sup> His address was a wonderful tonic to us all. Not that anyone on board was

<sup>1</sup>Of the 96 deaths no less than half were Royal Marines, reflecting the annihilation of the largely Royal Marine manned crews of Q turret gun house, working chamber, magazine and shell room by the 12-in hit and subsequent fire. The names of those who died are given below in the Appendix.

<sup>2</sup>Sadly, Grant's assessment owes more to wishful thinking than reality. The inflated losses claimed by the British led to later embarrassment when ships claimed sunk at Jutland sailed in to surrender in 1918. This, and the Grand Fleet's failure to exploit its opportunity to destroy the inferior High Sea Fleet fuelled the Jutland Controversy between the supporters of Jellicoe and Beatty which was carried to extremes in the 1920s during Beatty's tenure as First Sea Lord. Although heavy damage had been inflicted on some German ships of the High Sea Fleet, more British units had been sunk than German and the personnel casualties were 6,097 dead British to 2,559 dead Germans. Beatty's BCF had not been destroyed but each of its three squadrons had lost a third of its strength. Understandably the Germans spun 'Skagerrak' as a success which, in terms of Scheer's limited objective of disproportionate attrition, it was. The survival of the German Fleet as a 'fleet in being' was a serious handicap to the British for the rest of the war.

down in the mouth. Not a bit of it. Everyone was ready and eager for the next encounter with the enemy.

It happened that everything was quiet in the North Sea, and the opportunity was taken to remove our damaged turret for repairs. This was done at Walker Yard on the Tyne. The entire turret was lifted out and the vacant place covered over with a steel plate, after which we returned to Base.<sup>1</sup> We had occasional sweeps on the enemy coast,<sup>2</sup> and also visited Scapa Flow where we had a great reception from the Grand Fleet as we steamed between the lines of ships. Early in September we again proceeded to the Tyne to have our turret replaced and to have our turret magazine strengthened immediately overhead, as experience in action had proved this further protection necessary.<sup>3</sup> This took some time and the opportunity was taken of giving much needed leave. On the fifteenth of September I went on leave to Portsmouth. On this day, too, the Despatches and Awards for the Jutland Action were published. I got a paper at the station and in the train learned to my surprise that I had been promoted to Lieutenant under a certain clause in the King's Regulations. This meant that I was placed on the same list as lieutenant-ex-cadets, for pay, promotion and retired pay. I had also been awarded the French *Medaille Militaire*. As a result of this honour, I was the recipient of a large number of telegrams and letters from many friends in and out of the service. What pleased me most of all was that my Gunnery Officer was promoted to Commander, which brought my words true of the 31st December when reading out the half-yearly promotion list.

I spent a quiet and restful four days' leave at home and returned refreshed by the change of surroundings. A few days later we were ready to proceed to our base where we re-embarked our ammunition which had been discharged before proceeding to the Tyne. After our return, the Paymaster-Commander,<sup>4</sup> sent for me and said, 'Are you aware that under the clause of the Regulations by which you have been promoted, you are financially at a loss?' I told him that I was. He then said that he was positive that the Captain was not aware of this and that he would bring it to his notice. I replied that I wished it to remain as it was. To this he could not altogether agree, and he informed the Captain accordingly, who sent

<sup>1</sup>The work took from 27 June to 8 July; see Campbell, *The Navy and Defence*, p. 32.

<sup>2</sup>On one of which, in August 1916, the High Sea Fleet, making a sortie to bombard Sunderland and perhaps complete the destruction of the BCF, narrowly escaped destruction. It is interesting to speculate how *Lion*, down to only six 13.5 guns, would have coped with the eight 15-in guns of the German battleship she would have been facing on that occasion. Perhaps *Lion* had a lucky escape also.

<sup>3</sup>The work took from 6 to 23 September 1916 (Campbell, *The Navy and Defence*).

<sup>4</sup>Fleet Paymaster Charles Henry Rowe; he had been the ship's supply officer since commissioning.

for me and said that he had not been aware of the position and suggested that I should transfer to the list of Lieutenants-ex-Warrant Officers, a method of promotion which would benefit my pay considerably. My reply was that I was honoured and prized my promotion too much to think of such a thing and that there were other things in the world besides money.<sup>1</sup> I went on to say that being no longer a Gunner I anticipated being relieved. 'If so, I should be grateful if you could get me Command of a Destroyer.' To this request he entirely agreed and in a few days I was appointed to the command of the Destroyer *Griffon* attached to the Orkney and Shetland Patrol.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Becoming an officer by the normal route for former Warrant Officers would have stigmatised Grant as not being equivalent to one who had entered via Dartmouth or the Public School Entry. Commissioned ex-warrant officers were paid more than officers of equivalent rank of those who had entered as cadets to reflect their greater age and experience but their career prospects were much more limited. It is unlikely Grant would have got command of a destroyer in his better paid status.

<sup>2</sup>The flotilla unit engaged in coastal patrol duties in these northern waters. It was composed of old destroyers not considered suitable for front-line duties with the Grand Fleet. Grant's HMS *Griffon* (not 'Griffin' as in the original) was an early 355-ton 210-foot destroyer commissioned in 1897 for littoral duties against French torpedo boats.

## Appendix: List of Those Who Died on Board HMS *Lion* at the Battle of Jutland

According to information from Naval Historical Branch, Portsmouth (to whom great thanks is due for their unstinting help here and elsewhere in this chapter), *Lion's* dead were as follows:

Gunner George Backhouse RMA (Royal Marines Artillery), Private Philip Baker RMLI (Royal Marines Light Infantry), Gunner William Beer RMA, Gunner James Bell RMA, Stoker First Class Maurice Booth, Officers Steward First Class Thomas Bowles, Gunner Charles Bradford RMA, Canteen Assistant Sydney Brown, Gunner William Browne RMA, Chief Petty Officer William Bulley, Gunner Thomas Burke RMA, Stoker First Class Reginald Burt, Cook's Mate Horace Camp, Private William Case RMLI, Private Nicholas Casey RMLI, Gunner Arthur Chapman RMA, Private Frederick Chapman RMLI, Private Percy Coles RMLI, Private Samuel Cossey RMLI, Second Ship's Steward Stanley Crossman, Leading Stoker William Cunnane, Stoker First Class Isaac Da Costa, Ordinary Seaman Frank Dade, Armourer's Crew Matthew Dixon, Stoker First Class Patrick Doherty, Private Alfred Dorman RMLI, Ordinary Seaman Walter Edmonds, Gunner George Everett RMA, Private William Farley RMLI, Leading Seaman Jeremiah Fitzgerald, Stoker First Class Daniel Foley, Gunner William Froome RMA, Sick Berth Attendant First Class Frederick Gillham,	Warrant Electrician Edwin Goad, Gunner John Goss RMA, Gunner Reginald Green RMA, Private Thomas Green RMLI, Engine Room Artificer Third Class Mansel Griffiths, Major Francis Harvey RMLI, Gunner John Hayes RMA, Gunner Murlagh Hennessy RMA, Musician Joseph Hoad RM Band, Private Tom Houghton RMLI, Sergeant Charles Howchin RMLI, Corporal Thomas Hutchins RMA, Officer's Steward Second Class Fred Jane, Stoker First Class William Jones, Gunner John Kemp RMA, Leading Stoker William Kirkham RNR, Stoker First Class Alexander Logan, Stoker First Class George Lovett, Sergeant Charles Lucking RMA, Chaplain Cecil Lydall, Acting Leading Stoker Reginald Martin, Private William Martin RMLI, Able Seaman Alexander McCall, Stoker First Class Christopher McCarthy, Gunner Walter Mears RMA, Midshipman the Hon. Cecil Molyneux, Temporary Surgeon George Moon, Stoker First Class John Mooney, Officer's Steward Second Class John Moss, Stoker William Muir RNR, Able Seaman James Munday RNVR, Stoker Petty Officer George Newland, Gunner Victor Norris RMA, Gunner
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Walter Owen RMA, Stoker First Class John Pascoe, Gunner Joseph Pike RMA, Sergeant William Pope RMA, Private Robert Potter RMLI, Leading Stoker Douglas Preece, Private John Rafferty RMLI, Stoker First Class Alfred Reeby, Gunner Frederick Rogers RMLI, Corporal Frederick Rule RMA, Private Thomas Sales RMLI, Private Arnold Scott RMLI, Corporal Edward Sheppard RMLI, Canteen Assistant Arthur Simpson, Stoker First Class Francis Smith, Stoker First Class Samuel Smith, Gunner Thomas Smith RMA, Wireman

Second Class Walter Softley, Acting Chief Engine Room Artificer Alfred Stephens, Leading Stoker James Stevens, Officer's Cook Second Class Richard Sullivan, Stoker First Class Herbert Thorpe, Bombardier Wilfred Ulyatt RMA, Sick Berth Attendant John Vanstone, Gunner William Wagstaff RMA, Electrical Artificer William Westcott, Private William Weston RMLI, Private Archibald Wight RMLI, Gunner Vivian Willatts RMA, Able Seaman Frederick Williams, Acting Leading Stoker Thomas Williams, Gunner William Wynne RMA.

## X

### AUSTRALIAN NAVAL DEFENCE: SELECTIONS FROM THE PAPERS AND CORRESPONDENCE OF CAPTAIN W. H. C. S. THRING, 1913–34

*Edited by*  
*David Stevens*

Although relatively brief, the Australian career (1913–22) of Captain Walter Hugh Charles Samuel (Hugh) Thring is of more than passing interest; not least because his major achievements were intellectual and have long gone unrecognised in his adoptive Service. Arguably the early Royal Australian Navy's (RAN) most accomplished strategic thinker, he was undoubtedly a key figure in readying the fledgling navy for the onset of the First World War, and would eventually become responsible for practically all its wartime administration. Described in 1918 as a 'clever, silent well-informed man',<sup>1</sup> he was also an inveterate inventor and prolific writer, with particular interests in Pacific affairs, the history of trade routes and the technology of naval warfare.

Born in Wiltshire on 30 May 1873, Hugh Thring was the ninth child of the Reverend John Thring and his wife Lydia.<sup>2</sup> Entering the Royal Navy via HMS *Britannia* in 1886, he earned 12 months time-gained on graduation and then served in the Channel, Pacific and China Squadrons. Recognised early as a zealous and promising officer, Thring followed qualification in gunnery with an appointment to command the new 'Thirty-Knotter' destroyer HMS *Desperate*,<sup>3</sup> later taking part in Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee Review. In 1900 he was serving in the Mediterranean as Lieutenant (G) in HMS *Revenge*<sup>4</sup> when the spontaneous ignition of a cordite charge threatened to spread to the remainder of the magazine. Thring's conduct in entering the fume-filled compartment to

<sup>1</sup>Diary of G. E. Morrison, an adviser to the Chinese Government and keen observer of Australian personalities, 3 January 1918. Cited in letter from R. Lamont to author, 25 November 1994.

<sup>2</sup>See TNA, ADM196/43, and R. Lamont's entry on Thring, in G. Searle (ed.), *Australian Dictionary of Biography 1891–1939*, Vol. 12 (Melbourne, 1990). Thanks to Alastair Wilson for other career information.

<sup>3</sup>HMS *Desperate*: destroyer, 1897; 352 tons; 1×12pdrs; 2tt; 30 knots.

<sup>4</sup>HMS *Revenge*: battleship, 1894; 15,585 tons; 4×13.5in, 10×6in, 16×6pdrs, 12×3pdrs; 6tt; 16.5 knots.

prevent a further explosion received written praise from the Admiralty. An accomplished draughtsman and engineer, in 1902 he also designed one of the first 'rate of change of range' instruments to be used at sea. Promoted commander in 1903, Thring followed a staff appointment with several years as second-in-command of HMS *Vengeance*,<sup>1</sup> serving on the China Station until the end of the Russo-Japanese War. He joined Admiral Lord Charles Beresford's staff in 1908 and the next year his zeal and ability again received special mention, after the adoption of his 'rate of change of bearing' lines for the Dumaresq rate of change instrument.<sup>2</sup> Thring went on to complete the naval War Course, but his promising career thereafter faltered in the wake of bouts of ill-health and the ongoing fallout from the dispute between Beresford and the First Sea Lord, Admiral Sir John Fisher.<sup>3</sup> In the promotion list for 30 December 1910 seven officers were promoted over his head from the Commanders' list. Believing that his career prospects had disappeared, Thring resigned in February 1911.

Thring's naval association might thus have ended, but in August 1912 the Australian Commonwealth Naval Board (ACNB) began searching for a senior lieutenant (Gunnery or Torpedo) for an appointment as Assistant to the First Naval Member, Rear Admiral W. R. Creswell.<sup>4</sup> The ships of the RAN's new self-contained 'Fleet Unit', agreed to at the 1909 Imperial Conference, were nearing completion in the United Kingdom and due to arrive in Australia over the next 12 months.<sup>5</sup> Creswell, who had retired from the RN as a lieutenant in 1878, and whose last seagoing appointment was in 1900 as captain of the colonial gunboat *Protector*,<sup>6</sup> was judged 'able, but antiquated' by the then Commander-in-Chief Australia Station, Admiral Sir George King-Hall.<sup>7</sup> But, if out of touch with modern naval developments, Creswell readily understood how the RAN's future

<sup>1</sup>HMS *Vengeance*: battleship, 1902; 14,320 tons; 4×12in, 12×6in, 10×12pdrs, 6×3pdrs; 4tt; 18.3 knots.

<sup>2</sup>For details on the Dumaresq, see Appendix VIII, 'Trigonometric Computation of Change of Range and Bearing Rates, and Deflection', in J. T. Sumida (ed.), *The Pollen Papers: The Privately Circulated Printed Works of Arthur Hungerford Pollen, 1901–1916*, NRS (London, 1984).

<sup>3</sup>For a recent assessment of the Fisher–Beresford dispute see N. A Lambert, *Sir John Fisher's Naval Revolution* (Columbia, 1999).

<sup>4</sup>RA (later VA Sir) William Rooke Creswell, RAN (1852–1933); 1st Naval Member ACNB 1911–19.

<sup>5</sup>The invention of Sir John Fisher, the 'Fleet Unit' comprised a battlecruiser supported by several light cruisers. The force structure recommended for Australia also included a local defence flotilla of destroyers and submarines.

<sup>6</sup>HMAS *Protector*: colonial light cruiser 1883; 920 tons; 1×8in, 5×6in, 4×3pdrs; 14 knots.

<sup>7</sup>Adm. Sir George Fowler King-Hall, RN (1850–1939). 'King-Hall Diaries', entry for 20 February 1911, copy held by Sea Power Centre – Australia.



VII Portrait of Captain W. H. C. S. (Hugh) Thring in retirement

standing and success depended largely on the completeness of his planning.<sup>1</sup> As First Naval Member, his personal responsibilities included war preparations, naval intelligence, naval ordnance, fleet exercises and naval works, and he recognised that he was falling behind.

The search for a suitable officer proved frustrating. The lieutenants approached by Australia's Naval Representative in London, Captain F. F. Haworth-Booth,<sup>2</sup> were on the verge of promotion and unwilling to jeopardise their chances, while the commanders did not consider the salary offered sufficient. However, after six weeks of refusals, Haworth-Booth offered the Navy Office in Melbourne some hopeful news:

Captain Phillpotts,<sup>3</sup> the Naval Assistant to the Second Sea Lord, forwards me the name of Captain W. H. C. S. Thring who retired as Commander in February 1911 with rank of Captain. He was a brilliant Officer and possesses all the necessary essentials for the post of Naval Assistant, to the First Naval Member. He obtained five first class Certificates, promoted Lieutenant for meritorious examinations, was a first class Gunnery Officer, with very considerable Staff and Administrative experience, viz: – Flag Commander (Chief Intelligence Officer) to Lord Charles Beresford when that Officer was Commander-in-Chief of Channel Fleet; Lieutenant G and Commander on Staff of Admiral Commanding the Coast Guard and Reserves. He has also been through the Naval 'War' College Course, and I understand he retired because he was not promoted to Captain in what he considered was his turn, and it is, I think, generally understood that he suffered on account of the dissension between Lord Charles Beresford and the Admiralty some three years ago. He is a Danish and French scholar, and also served as Commander (second in command) of a Battleship for over three years, and is thus fully qualified for a Staff appointment. He is also very highly recommended by Captain Phillpotts for this appointment, and I believe would be glad of it.<sup>4</sup>

On 17 December 1912 Thring accepted a two-year appointment as a commander, RAN, on a consolidated annual salary of £600. He sailed for Australia at the end of January 1913. Taking immediate advantage of Thring's professional expertise, the ACNB had already directed him to

<sup>1</sup>National Archives of Australia (NAA): MP472/1, 5/19/794, minute, Creswell to Naval Secretary, 8 August 1912.

<sup>2</sup>Capt. (later RA Sir) Francis Fitzgerald Haworth-Booth, RN (1864–1935); Naval Adviser to the High Commissioner for Australia in London 1911–20.

<sup>3</sup>Capt. (later Adm.) Edward Montgomery Phillpotts, RN (1871–1952); Naval Assistant to 2nd Sea Lord, Admiralty, 1912–15.

<sup>4</sup>NAA: MP1049/14, 1912/9634, '21st Report from Naval Representative London', 22 November 1912.

obtain the latest information on the director trials of HMS *Thunderer*<sup>1</sup> and the Pollen system of fire control [1].

Arriving at the Navy Office in mid-March, Thring had little time for orientation before accompanying the Second Naval Member, Captain H. C. Hughes-Onslow,<sup>2</sup> and the Chief of the General Staff, Brigadier General J. M. Gordon,<sup>3</sup> on an inspection tour of northern Australia.<sup>4</sup> Directed to prepare a report on the future of Thursday Island in the Torres Strait as a fortified outpost, they soon determined that their mission was futile without a general Australian war strategy and decided to expand the study's scope. Most importantly, they readily agreed on Australia's need to embrace an alternative maritime strategy; one that accounted for the Pacific's unique circumstances and that, if necessary, could function independently of imperial needs. The three men collaborated on their reports, but it was Thring who originated the general idea of a naval frontier or 'advanced line' which became the central theme of the team's strategic plan. Either countering or deterring a potential Japanese attack through a combination of early warning, forward basing and high technology, the plan represented the first attempt at a detailed examination of the potential functions of an independent Australian Navy and its relationship to other aspects of national power [2].

The strategic principles Thring presented in his paper display many parallels with the contemporary work of Sir Julian Corbett.<sup>5</sup> Notably the foundation upon the maxim that the defensive is the stronger form of maritime war, the need for cooperative operations with the Army, and the stress placed upon the importance of sea communications – both own and enemy. The plan may even represent the first attempt to put some of Corbett's theories into practice. However, by challenging existing policy it did not gain ready acceptance in the Navy Office. Dubbing it the 'Thring Line', and perceiving an advanced barrier rather than a trip wire, Creswell dismissed the plan as 'nearly as futile as building a wall to catch a bird'.<sup>6</sup> Moreover, as well as advocating defended fleet bases in the Northern Territory and Papua, Thring believed the RAN needed to operate at least

<sup>1</sup>HMS *Thunderer*: battleship, 1912; 25,870 tons; 10×13.5in, 16×4in, 4×3pdrs; 3tt; 21 knots.

<sup>2</sup>Capt (later RA) Henry Constantine Hughes-Onslow, RN (1867–1948); 2nd Naval Member ACNB 1912–13.

<sup>3</sup>Brig.-Gen. Joseph Maria Gordon (1856–1929), Australian Chief of the General Staff, 1912–14.

<sup>4</sup>See D. Stevens, "'Defend the North": Commander Thring, Captain Hughes-Onslow and the beginnings of Australian naval strategic thought', in D. Stevens and J. Reeve (eds), *Southern Trident: Strategy, History and the Rise of Australian Naval Power* (Sydney, 2001).

<sup>5</sup>See J. S. Corbett, *Some Principles of Maritime Strategy* (London, 1911).

<sup>6</sup>NAA: MP1049/1, 15/054, 'Remarks by 1st NM', 1 September 1913.

a second Fleet Unit plus lighter supporting forces. Creswell well knew that there was little hope of Australia soon implementing such a costly building programme. In the event, staffing delays followed by the outbreak of war reduced the immediate need for action, but undaunted, Thring published the plan's fundamentals in the *Naval Review*,<sup>1</sup> and further refined his proposals over subsequent years.<sup>2</sup>

Meanwhile, Thring turned his attention to the RAN's administration, doing much to place this on a professional footing in the months before August 1914. In addition to assisting Creswell with technical matters, he set up and directed the Intelligence Service and prepared the RAN's War Book. Although working largely alone, the comprehensiveness of his efforts meant that, at the outbreak of war, not only was the Naval Board the best informed Australian governmental body on regional issues, but also that the RAN and its auxiliary services were able to respond to the unfolding crisis without misunderstanding or delay. Navy Office moved onto a war footing on 31 July 1914, with Thring as Director of War Staff (DWS) thereafter working 'literally night and day'.<sup>3</sup> Yet with the Australian Fleet passing almost immediately to Admiralty control, his influence on operational planning had its limits. Particularly frustrating was the Admiralty's determination to retain the flagship HMAS *Australia*<sup>4</sup> in the western Pacific to escort a succession of expeditions to seize German possessions, rather than pursue and eliminate Vice-Admiral Graf von Spee's<sup>5</sup> East Asiatic Cruiser Squadron [17]. 'Much the same,' Thring lamented later, 'as if a squadron at Malta operating against an enemy in the Eastern Mediterranean, were ordered to escort an expedition from the north of Scotland to Halifax.'<sup>6</sup>

Promoted captain on 1 January 1915, Thring was appointed Director of Naval Ordnance in addition to his existing duties. His interests remained eclectic and, ever the scholar, his advice was sought on such diverse matters as the study of naval history at the newly established Royal Australian Naval College (RANC) [3]. An attempt to be reinstated on the RN's Active List, although supported by Creswell, was rejected by the

<sup>1</sup>'The Pacific Problem', *Naval Review*, Vol. II, 1914, p. 160.

<sup>2</sup>For these plans see, I. Cowman, "'The Vision Splendid': Australia, Naval Strategy and Empire, 1919–23', in D. Stevens (ed.), *In Search of a Maritime Strategy: The maritime element in Australian defence planning since 1901*, Canberra Papers on Strategy and Defence No. 119 (Canberra, 1997).

<sup>3</sup>NAA: A1606, 22/3/181, letter, Acting Navy Minister (Poynton) to Acting Prime Minister (Watt), 27 November 1918.

<sup>4</sup>HMAS *Australia*: battlecruiser, 1913; 22,080 tons; 8×12in, 16×4in, 4×3pdrs; 2tt; 23.5 knots.

<sup>5</sup>VA Maximilian J. M. H. Reichsgraf von Spee (1861–1914), Cdr German East Asian Station 1912–14.

<sup>6</sup>London, *Daily Telegraph*, 4 November 1936.

Admiralty, but Thring's commitment never wavered.<sup>1</sup> In addition to his naval defence, intelligence and censorship responsibilities he had soon replaced Creswell on the Australian Federal Munitions Committee, and by the end of the war largely administered the Australian Mercantile Marine. Reports of enemy activities in regional waters could seldom be dismissed without thorough investigation, and the threat of German surface and sub-surface raiders regularly exercised Thring's attention. Despite the absence of most of the Australian fleet overseas, a dearth of local resources and the lack of useful information from the Admiralty, he persistently argued for appropriate defensive measures and a regular armed patrol service off Australia's major ports. Particularly frustrating for Thring was Creswell's reluctance to keep the government and the Admiralty fully informed of the dire implications that such an extension to enemy operations would bring [4, 5, 6].

Thring might deal diligently with the practical problems of running a wartime navy, yet he could do little to improve the inadequate communication between defence agencies. Nor could he smooth the personal clashes that plagued relationships both within the ACNB and between the Board and a succession of largely incompetent Navy Ministers.<sup>2</sup> The situation became so bad that in 1917 Parliament appointed a Royal Commission to inquire into Naval and Defence administration. Elsewhere, Thring's expansion of naval censorship and counter-intelligence work had led to conflicts with other Australian surveillance organisations, notably the Counter Intelligence Bureau under Sir George Steward.<sup>3</sup> These problems partially stemmed from the lack of a body to coordinate the work of all government departments involved in defence. Thring had proposed such an expanded Council of Defence in 1916, but various delays held up implementation until April 1918, and even then the Government failed to appoint a permanent Secretary.

In this unhelpful climate Thring continued his attempts to formulate strategic plans for the post-war RAN, while fending off Admiralty proposals to establish a single Empire Navy and dealing with such complex joint-service issues as the establishment of an air service. The absence from April 1918 of Prime Minister W. M. Hughes<sup>4</sup> and Navy

<sup>1</sup>Various correspondence, December 1914–January 1915 on file NAA: MP1049/1, 1914/0414.

<sup>2</sup>For an assessment see R. Hyslop, *Australian Naval Administration 1900–1939* (Melbourne, 1973).

<sup>3</sup>Sir George Charles Thomas Steward (1865–1920); Official Secretary to the Gov.-Gen. 1902–19; founder and Head Counter Intelligence Bureau 1916–19; Chief Commissioner of Victorian Police 1919–20.

<sup>4</sup>William Morris Hughes (1862–1952), Australian Prime Minister 1915–23.

Minister Sir Joseph Cook<sup>1</sup> at the Imperial War Conference in London, did little to assist resolution.<sup>2</sup> Although the unremitting stress was beginning to tell, Thring did his best to influence the Acting Prime Minister, W. A. Watt,<sup>3</sup> and could take some comfort in the knowledge that his Head of Naval Intelligence, Lieutenant Commander J. G. Latham, RANB,<sup>4</sup> had gone as Cook's personal secretary and adviser [7]. Cook, however, seemed unwilling to concentrate on the London negotiations, and many policy questions remained unanswered. In mid-1918 Thring suffered a major breakdown, but arguing the need for a change of environment, at war's end he secured an appointment to command the elderly cruiser HMAS *Encounter*.<sup>5</sup>

Notwithstanding the Armistice, there remained no shortage of naval tasks. The day after Thring joined, *Encounter* sailed from Sydney carrying a medical relief expedition to Britain's South Pacific possessions, where an influenza epidemic had decimated the indigenous populations of Fiji, Samoa and Tonga, and left one RAN ship, HMAS *Fantome*,<sup>6</sup> in Suva with most of her crew incapacitated. Conditions had improved by the time *Encounter* arrived, but much remained to be done and, in addition to the medical teams, volunteer working parties were assembled to assist where necessary. Local authorities later judged the professional skill and knowledge brought from Australia as of great assistance.<sup>7</sup> As usual, Thring maintained a broader perspective on what his ship's presence might accomplish [8].

Returning safely to Sydney and with no illness on board, *Encounter* spent less than a month at home before sailing for Darwin in the Northern Territory. Here an industrial dispute had escalated to the point where unionists directly threatened the Commonwealth-appointed Administrator. For almost a month the cruiser provided a dominating presence in the harbour and then left for Melbourne with the Administrator and his family embarked. This incident and other evidence of labour unrest coloured Thring's view of likely social developments in Australia, but he had

<sup>1</sup>Sir Joseph Cook (1860–1947), Australian Prime Minister 1913–14; Navy Minister 1917–20.

<sup>2</sup>See N. Tracy (ed.), *The Collective Naval Defence of the Empire*, NRS (London, 1997), pp. 230–33.

<sup>3</sup>William Alexander Watt (1871–1946), Australian Treasurer 1918–20; Acting Prime Minister 1918–19.

<sup>4</sup>Honorary Lt. Cdr (later Sir) John Greig Latham, RANB (1877–1964), Head of Naval Intelligence, Navy Office 1917–19; Member House of Representatives 1922–34.

<sup>5</sup>HMAS *Encounter*: second-class protected cruiser, 1905; 5,880 tons; 11×6in, 8×12pdrs, 6×3pdrs; 21k; 21 knots.

<sup>6</sup>HMAS *Fantome*: sloop, 1904; 1,070 tons; 6×4in, 4×3pdrs; 10 knots.

<sup>7</sup>Thring Papers, letter, His Britannic Majesty's Agent and Consul Tonga to Thring, 12 December 1918.

already departed *Encounter*, having received unexpected orders to take command of the modern cruiser HMAS *Brisbane*<sup>1</sup> and bring her back from England. While on passage Thring became aware that an old friend, Commodore F. C. Dreyer,<sup>2</sup> had been appointed Chief of Staff for Lord Jellicoe's forthcoming mission to Australia as part of a wider review of imperial naval defence.<sup>3</sup> The opportunity could not be missed and Thring forwarded his own candid brief on Australian personalities and the Pacific situation [9]. The limits of Thring's influence on Jellicoe's final report might be debated, but his successor as DWS, Captain G. F. Hyde, RAN,<sup>4</sup> was attached to Jellicoe's staff throughout the visit, and the mission had access to a substantial body of existing work. Certainly, Jellicoe's overall strategic appreciation echoed Thring's long-standing views, and many of the details surrounding regional naval cooperation, operating concepts and fleet basing were similar.<sup>5</sup>

Shortly after joining *Brisbane* Thring's health again failed him. Although forced to relinquish command, he managed to keep busy establishing important contacts in London, rebuilding bridges with the RN and giving the occasional lecture [10]. There followed a brief return to Australia, until his appointment in early 1920 as the RAN's Liaison Officer at the Admiralty. On hearing of this, the now retired Creswell seemed pleased that Thring had found something which suited him, and offered his evidently sincere thanks:

I think it was time I retired when all my endeavours on your behalf were disregarded and the greatest lack in any 'head' is failure to obtain just recognition of the services of those under him. I felt this very keenly on your behalf. It is the simple literal truth to say that throughout the war your service to the Navy Office and the country was invaluable and that nobody more than yourself had earned the highest recognition from the Empire. With such Ministers as we had – Jensen<sup>6</sup> kicked out of the Ministry & Cook whose enthusiasm for the advancement of his

<sup>1</sup>HMAS *Brisbane*: light cruiser, 1916; 5,400 tons; 8×6in, 1×3in, 1×12pdr; 2tt; 25.5 knots.

<sup>2</sup>Cdre (later Adm. Sir) Frederic Charles Dreyer (1878–1956), Director of Naval Ordnance, Admiralty 1917–18, Cdre and Chief of Staff to Jellicoe on his mission to India and the Dominions, 1919–20.

<sup>3</sup>For details on the Empire Mission and Jellicoe's Report see A. Temple Patterson (ed.), *The Jellicoe Papers: Selections from the private and official correspondence of Admiral of the Fleet Earl Jellicoe*, Vol. II 1916–1935, NRS (London, 1968).

<sup>4</sup>Capt. (later Adm. Sir) Francis Hyde, RAN (1877–1937), Director of War Staff, Navy Office 1918–19; First Naval Member ACNB 1931–37.

<sup>5</sup>Of particular note, was Jellicoe's proposal to establish two major fleet bases in Bynoe Harbour and Sewa Bay in Papua. The site for the latter had been surveyed in 1915 and named 'Thring Harbour'.

<sup>6</sup>Jens August Jensen (1865–1936), Australian Navy Minister 1915–17.

officers is so well controlled and interest in the Service and the Depart[ment] is capable of estimate I could do little.<sup>1</sup>

Thring was later awarded the CBE, and in consequence of his close wartime association with the Imperial Japanese Navy also received the Japanese Order of the Rising Sun (3rd Class). However, Thring's distrust of Japan's long-term intentions had not lessened. For the next two years he did his best to ensure that Pacific affairs remained high on the Admiralty's agenda, while simultaneously keeping Australian authorities informed on British thinking on matters ranging from strategic intelligence to the RAN's future force structure in the light of changing technology [11, 13]. Latham, who had returned to the Bar in 1919 and harboured political ambitions, remained an important contact [14], while another was Major E. L. Piesse,<sup>2</sup> since May 1919 Director of the Pacific Branch in the Prime Minister's Department [12]. In 1921 Piesse went as a member of the Australian delegation led by Senator Sir George Pearce<sup>3</sup> to the Washington disarmament conference. Thring contributed as best he could, warning that the British delegates had little first-hand knowledge of the continuing 'Pacific problem' and sending Piesse copies of his own considered assessments, including some recently published in the *Naval Review* [15].

For almost a decade Thring's fertile mind had served Australia well, but in March 1922 the ACNB determined that the positions of Naval Representative and Liaison Officer should be combined as an economy measure. Faced with either retirement or returning to Australia in an unimportant role, Thring chose the former. He spent the rest of his life in England, later becoming Principal Investigator to a joint committee of shipbuilders, coalowners and government attempting to restore the coal bunkering trade. He continued his research and writing [16], and although a major work on the history of trade routes failed to find a publisher, parts did appear in the *Naval Review*.<sup>4</sup> Thring also corresponded with several other defence writers, and in addition to contributions to the naval history of the Great War [17] he provided a chapter on Pacific problems to Hector Bywater's *Searchlight on the Navy*.<sup>5</sup> Thring died on 17 January 1949 in Bristol.

<sup>1</sup>Thring Papers, letter, Creswell to Thring, 22 February 1920.

<sup>2</sup>Maj. Edmund Leolin Piesse (1880–1947), Director of Military Intelligence 1916–19; Head of Pacific Branch 1919–23.

<sup>3</sup>Senator Sir George F. Pearce (1870–1952), Australian Minister for Defence 1908–09, 1910–13, 1914–21, 1932–34.

<sup>4</sup>'Trade Routes and their Influence', parts I–IV, *Naval Review*, Vol. XVI, 1928; parts V–X, Vol. XVII, 1929.

<sup>5</sup>H. C. Bywater, *Searchlight on the Navy* (London, 1934).

# 1. *Letter to the Naval Secretary on fire control systems*

R.M.S. Osterley<sup>1</sup>

at sea Colombo to Fremantle

3 March 1913

In accordance with instructions received by cable from the Commonwealth Naval Board ordering me to enquire into and to make a full report on the *Thunderer* trials, and on Mr Pollen's plotting and Range keeping instruments, I have to report that I have made as full an enquiry as conditions seemed to require.

My instructions being short, I had first to consider the object for which my report would be required, and then to investigate in such a way as to fulfil that object.

I concluded that my report would be required for the purpose of deciding which methods, if any, should be adopted for the ships of the Commonwealth Navy. I have therefore confined my enquiry to the limits which would attain that object. As the Admiralty have decided to adopt the 'Service' method of rangekeeping, I have found it necessary to enquire into and report on this method as well as the 'Argo' method.

I beg to request that you will lay the enclosed reports before the Navy Board, together with this letter.

## 1A. *Report on Thunderer trials. 13 November 1912*

### A. *Director Firing*

#### **Application of System**

1. Director firing does not take the place of the existing systems of controlled independent, or of independent firing. Its introduction is, therefore, a complication. The Committee (*Thunderer* Committee, Admiral Sir P. Scott and other officers) reports that the 'Service' system of control must be retained for primary control at present and for local control always. Under suitable conditions no system of control is more rapid than independent. Hence this must be retained. Director firing adds two more systems which require considerable training, organisation and practice:—

(a) Director firing from a director position aloft.

(b) Director firing from X turret.

It does, however, take the place of 'ripple' and similar firings.

<sup>1</sup>For consistency, all ship names in the documents have been placed in italics.

### **Advantages and use**

2. Under the existing system of carrying out Battle Practice, firing must take place in such a direction that smoke does not interfere with the laying of guns, in order to get the most useful training and results; i.e. it is carried out in a definite direction relative to the wind. This will probably be impossible in action. With Director firing smoke interference is almost negligible. The position aloft has great advantages as neither spray, nor the splash of enemies' shot and shell, cloud the glasses, or interfere. To a less extent this is true of the X turret position.

The Committee report:—

- (a) Director firing can be continued when the Enemy may be completely obscured from one or more Turrets.
- (b) It is probably more rapid than other methods in action.
- (c) An analysis of the fall of shot shows that the spread of shot for elevation is less than in other methods.

### **Recommendation of *Thunderer* Committee**

- (d) The results of trials having demonstrated the superiority of Director firing, both as regards rapidity and accuracy, over other systems, it should forthwith be adopted in H.M. Service.
- (e) A trial of Vickers fittings for directing gun systems for 6" guns is recommended.

### ***B. Methods of carrying out Director Firings.***

#### **Method 1. Director Aloft**

The Director is adjusted for the usual sighting correction and is used as a gun sight. Pointers on the elevating arc and training arc move similar pointers in all the turrets. These pointers are 'followed' by the gun layers and trainers. The guns are laid to a suitable elevation, following the director; and, when laid, the director and guns are not moved again for elevation. Similarly they are trained by following the pointer. The firer tries to train on the target on the *upward* roll, he then makes a definite judged movement, which should bring on his sights on the downward roll, after which he does not move the Director again. By this means time is given to the gun layers and trainers to get their guns accurately laid, by pointer, so that at the time of firing the guns are not being moved.

Considerable practice is obviously necessary for this; and if the sights do not come on, on the downward roll, the whole process, for the training movement only, must be gone through again. In practice this method has been found to work well.

The guns are fired on the downward roll so that the recoil may tend to steady the ship.

## Method 2. Directing Turret

Trials were also carried out directing from a turret. In this method a turret gun sight is used instead of the Director telescope, the turret guns themselves being laid.

In the other turrets there is no change from the Director method. B and X turrets were tried. X turret proved the better and is recommended as a secondary Director position.

It was claimed for the directing turret method that it would be easier for the other turrets to follow the movements in training and elevating. A little practice at the Director soon enabled the firer to learn the rate at which he should train and elevate, in order that the turrets could follow; so this advantage proved immaterial. The turret may be unable to lay, owing to spray &c., and herein the Director has the advantage.

## C. Trials.

Preliminary training practices and firings were carried out by the *Thunderer* with varying results. As the bare records give little information and are often misleading I append only the result of the final comparative firing by *Orion*<sup>1</sup> and *Thunderer*. The opinions of officers who witnessed the practices or trials are far more instructive. I therefore add a synopsis of the reports of the D.N.O. (Director of Naval Ordnance) and I.T.P. (Inspector of Target Practice). In this summary I have, in places, included matter gathered in conversation with Admirals Browning<sup>2</sup> (I.T.P.) and Tudor<sup>3</sup> (D.N.O.) and other officers.

## D. Extracts from report of I.T.P. and others:

### I.T.P.

1. Motion of *Orion* nearly double that of *Thunderer*.
2. Conditions in both cases known and easy. Range did not alter.
3. Consider results obtained justify wiring and placing of orders for instruments for *main armaments of large ships under construction*. Not for existing ships until after further trials.

<sup>1</sup>HMS *Orion*: battleship, 1912; 25,870 tons; 10×13.5in, 16×4in, 4×3pdrs; 3tt; 21 knots.

<sup>2</sup>RA (later Adm. Sir) Edward Montague Browning, RN (1863–1947), Inspector Target Practice 1911–13; 2nd Sea Lord, Admiralty 1919–20.

<sup>3</sup>RA Sir Frederick Charles Tudor, RN (1863–1946), Director of Naval Ordnance and Torpedoes 1912–14; C.-in-C., China Station 1917–19.

4. Remains to be proved if exact mechanical and electrical accuracy can be maintained on service.
5. Impossible, or most difficult, to fire when ship is under helm.

### **I.T.P.s opinion**

6. Under certain conditions better results may be obtained with director firing than with direct laying.

### **Other officers remarks &c.**

7. With an irregular motion, trainer experiences considerable difficulty in forecasting the exact training required before the sights roll on for elevation and frequently misses several rolls from this cause.
8. Disadvantageous to fire 10 gun salvoes. 5 gun salvoes better (reasons: – smoke, guns not ready, slower in end, longer intervals between salvoes and hits).
9. Results of firing by director aloft were better than by 'B' turret, largely due to difficulty experienced by trainer in forecasting training to roll on.
10. I am informed by officers who witnessed the trials that the excellent result obtained by *Thunderer* must be regarded with caution. The conditions helped, but the actual results of the *Thunderer*'s firing were, by chance, above the average, and would be unlikely to recur often; whilst those of the *Orion* were below the average to be expected.

On the other hand the change of range question scarcely enters into the trial of such a system. The ship had a steady roll, but there was no pitching and, theoretically, pitch tends to spread the shots in elevation in broadside firing whilst roll does not. In practice this spread has been less than might be expected, and this is set down to a bending of the gun and to gyroscopic action due to rotation of the projectile.

\* \* \*

### **1B. The 'Argo' and 'Service' systems of Plotting**

In reporting on the 'Argo' (Pollen) system of range keeping, a comparison with the 'Service' (Dreyer) system is almost inevitable.

2. The plans, drawings and descriptions of the 'Argo' system are very complete and need little comment. A secret book containing notes on the 'Service' system is being sent from the Admiralty to the Secretary, Commonwealth Navy Board.

### *A. General Remarks on Plotting*

Plotting has, to some extent, dropped out of favour with Lieutenants 'G', who often use only a time and distance curve to obtain a rate. This may be due to the conditions laid down for Battle Practice, but it is to be accounted for to a greater extent by the fact that too much was expected from plotting.

#### **Origin and use of Plotting.**

2. The aim of Plotting is to obtain a correct range and correct rates of change of range and bearing. From these the sights can be kept correctly adjusted for range and deflection.

3. If a Range finder was an accurate instrument, and could be continuously used, plotting would be unnecessary. With Range finder readings, as with astronomical observations, the mean of a large number of observations has to be taken to attain a correct result.

4. Two methods of meaning presented themselves:-

- a. Arithmetical.
- b. Geometrical.

As a forecast of range was required the geometrical method, or 'Plotting system' was adopted.

5. Amongst many difficulties the following are noteworthy:-

- a. As the Range finder has become more accurate, the firing range has increased and the difficulty from inaccuracy is greater than before.
- b. The necessary internal movements of fleets, and the constant change in helm and speed in a ship keeping station in a long line of battle, make plotting very difficult.

6. The 'Argo' instruments were formerly far in advance of the 'Service' instruments, and gave an 'understandable' plot (direct plotting of course and speed of ship and enemy), but the latest development in the Service instrument has changed this.

7. It is true that plotting, in its present development, may often be useless both before and throughout an action; but, on the other hand, it may be most useful and may give a correct range and rate whence the decided advantage of early hitting may be attained.

8. Hence plotting instruments should be installed in a ship.

9. The Admiralty have decided that better practical results may be obtained with the 'Service' system than with the 'Argo' system, and at a lower cost. With this decision, after examining the two systems and the available instruments, I agree.

### B. Comparison of Systems.

#### 1. Both systems consist of:—

- a. Range finder, mountings, and automatic communication to the plotting tables.
- b. Gyro compass and communication to the plotting tables.
- c. Range clock fed with results from:—
 

Plotting	(Argo system).
Plotting or Dumaques	(Service system).
- d. The Range clock plots back:—
 

On plot	(Argo system)
On time & Range plot	(Service system).
- e. In either system the clock can be tuned up to the plot. Then the spotting correction can be inset and the gun range shown and communicated.
- f. Both systems supply a rate of change of bearing which, by means of a range scale, is transformed into deflection and is communicated to the guns.

2. The essential difference between the two systems lies in the plotting. The other variants lie in the relative efficiency of the two sets of instruments for performing the same work.

3. In the 'Argo' system plots of the courses and speeds of own ship and of the enemy are made. From these, *by measurement*, the actual speeds are obtained and are set on the Argos clock. The actual relative courses are also obtained, by inspection and are set on the clock. The clock is also adjusted for range and bearing at any moment, and it then shows the rates of change of range and bearing, and feeds the range automatically to the range indicators. The deflection is, by means of a scale, set on the deflection indicators. Thus an actual *measurement* of the enemy's speed must be made from the plot. *This takes time*, a matter of great importance when it is remembered that a *forecast* of range has to be given to the guns. An error in either range or bearing throws out the plot and causes errors in both range and deflection.

4. The 'Service' system is designed to obtain directly the two required factors viz:— rate of change of range, and rate of change of bearing.

Each is found independently of the other, so that an error in one is not communicated to the other. For this purpose two plotting tables are used. On one is plotted automatically a range and time curve; on the other a true bearing and time curve. The slopes of the curves give respectively the rate

of change of range and rate of change of bearing. These are fed to the clock (adjusted automatically for range and bearing) and the clock keeps the range. From the Dumaresq attached to the clock, speeds and courses may be read. Rate of change of bearing is set on a scale which communicates deflection to the deflection instruments.

*C. Advantages and disadvantages.*

a. The advantages claimed for the 'Service' method are:—

1. The bearing plot and range plot being separate, either one may be correct, and useful, if the other is thrown out. The 'Argo' method is thrown out by an error in either.
2. The ordinary Dumaresq method can be used:—
  - (a) to check the plot.
  - (b) to begin or continue the plot.
  - (c) to read course and speed of enemy.

This to some extent compensates for the advantage possessed by the 'Argo' method of making a simple 'understandable' plot.

3. The 'Service' method gives directly what is wanted (without measuring course and speed as in 'Argo' method) viz:—

Rates of change of distance.

Rates of change of bearing.

4. The clock can be easily tuned up to the Range finder (just before firing or whenever necessary). This makes Range rate errors of less importance.

5. Direct automatic connection with the compass keeps bearings &c correct during changes of course.

'Service' method plots relative to true N.

'Argo' method plots relative to keel line.

6. The 'Service' installation is comparatively cheap.

b. Some advantages claimed for the 'Argo' system are:—

1. Great accuracy and mechanical efficiency of instruments.
2. Few operators.
3. Straight line plotting of relative courses and speeds of ship and enemy.
4. Can be used under all conditions of alterations of course by ship or enemy. (This is equally true of latest 'Service' method.)
5. Occupies smaller space than the 'Service' method.

*D. Remarks on advantages and disadvantages*

1. The 'Argo' method plots a straight course as a straight line. The 'Service' system plots both Ranges and Bearings on a curve, thus rendering meaning and forecasting more difficult. I am informed that this is found to be no disadvantage in practice, as the plot is on a large enough scale to make the curve almost straight.

2. The 'Argo' company ask high prices for their instruments. I am told that they have spent about £80,000 on experimental work of which the Admiralty have paid about £60,000.

3. The 'Service' instruments are designed and made by a private firm to the orders of the Admiralty. The Admiralty pay for work done in designing, patenting &c.

The result is that the 'Service' instruments can, I am informed by the Naval Ordnance Department, be supplied for £700 complete. (This does not include cost of rangefinder, mounting and transmission, or gyro compass.)

*E. General remarks*

1. The Admiralty are now satisfied with the nature of the 'Service' instruments, but it is hoped that improvements may be made in details.

2. The information on which the 'Argo' instruments have been made has been supplied by the Navy. The Admiralty have decided to shut off this supply. The result will be that the 'Argo' instruments will be put on the open market. This has been fully considered by the Admiralty.

3. It is undesirable to enter into the question of Policy in this report but the Director of Naval Ordnance has stated the position to me. Should the Board consider it desirable to install 'Argo' instruments it would be necessary for me to repeat to the Members the D.N.O. statement. Otherwise I think it would be better not to do so.

*F. Opinion*

In my opinion the latest 'Service' instrument is better suited to practical use than the 'Argo' instruments. There have, however, been no comparative trials of these instruments. The Admiralty have gone very carefully into the matter and I should advise that their proposals for installation should be followed, and that the H.M.A.S. *Australia* and one ship of the *Melbourne*<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>HMAS *Melbourne*: light cruiser, 1913; 5,400 tons; 8×6in, 1×3in, 1×12pdr; 2tt; 25.7 knots.

class should be supplied with the 'Service' installation as fitted in similar ships.

\* \* \*

## 2. *Report to the Naval Secretary: naval defence of Australia*

5 July 1913

### REPORT ON THE NAVAL DEFENCE OF AUSTRALIA

#### *General considerations of policy and strategy*

During the visits to Papua, Thursday Island and the Northern Territory, in which I have had the honour to accompany General Gordon and Captain Hughes-Onslow, R.N, we have had, whilst at sea, time to study and discuss, from a point of view of both arms, the general and strategical questions connected with the defence of Australasia. With the courteous help of the Government officials and others at the various ports we have been able to obtain the information we required, and to consider on the spot, the various questions. We have also received much help from the Captains, Officers and Pilots of the vessels in which we travelled. I now propose to put forward, as briefly and clearly as I can, my conclusions.

Australia has always enjoyed peace. It may be difficult to realise that such a state of affairs is not necessarily permanent. Australia has been able to develop in peace because of the work which has been done by the British Fleet in other waters. The squadron stationed in Australian waters has been somewhat of a holiday squadron, but ceaseless work has been going on in the big Fleets. There is now a possible enemy who can strike a deadly blow at Australia before help can come. The ultimate safety of Australia will lie, as in the past, with the British Fleet; but we, here, must be prepared to hold the foe during the months which must elapse before help can come to us.

#### *Political considerations affecting strategy*

In order to arrive at an adequate plan of defence it is necessary to have a clear understanding of the nature and strength of attack which may reasonably be expected. The dangers may be divided under two heads:—

- a) An European war between England and one or more powers.
- b) An attack by an Asiatic power on Australia.

Under a), the principal studies are:

- 1) Attack on enemy's war ships in Eastern waters.
- 2) Defence of sea borne commerce.
- 3) Attack on enemy's sea borne commerce.
- 4) Attack or raid on enemy's territory.
- 5) Defence against attack or raid by enemy.

I do not propose to deal with these in detail as the plan of defence against the greater strength of an Asiatic power covers the lesser operations of (a) although it will be necessary to draw up separate plans for (a).

Is an attack by an Asiatic power a danger to be reasonably expected? Nothing is more certain that if a nation has valuable possessions and wishes to retain them, she must take adequate means to defend them by force. Briefly, we may dismiss all means of ensuring peace save by armed force.

*Geographical and political considerations affecting strategy*

Geographically, the position of Australia with respect to Asia and the Pacific may be compared to that of England to the North of Europe. A strong power in Australia would hold the high-road to the Pacific. It can keep this road open, or close it, at will. It could control the sea borne commerce of Asia, the most densely populated portion of the globe. A strong sea power in Australia would hold India, the Malay Peninsula, the Islands and China largely in its power. It could make its power felt in any one of them.

Imagine Australia in the hands of Japan and it is not difficult to foresee the greater part of Asia under Japanese control. It would entail the downfall not alone of British power in the East but that of every other European nation. If this is admitted, what a responsibility lies with Australia!

And what is the position? If Japan seized Australia, the threat of a Japanese descent on the West Coast of America would be removed. If America gives up the Philippines, and Japan seizes them, the danger to America is greatly lessened; whilst that to Australia is vastly increased.

For an Oriental nation to control Eastern Asia appears a natural event, but what would it mean to the future of the world? The late Mr Homer Lea in his book 'Value of Ignorance' (p. 90) states:—

'the possession by a nation of highly strategic points is, unless (they are) defended beyond a question of doubt, even more provocative of war than territories sought after on account of their intrinsic wealth'.

*Is an attack by Japan reasonably to be feared?*

I consider that, in the Northern Territory, Australia possesses a highly important strategic centre, and in view of the above facts, and many others which could be stated, the danger of a descent by the Japanese, in their own good time, is a very real danger, almost mounting to a certainty, unless adequate steps are taken for defence against it.

I do not mean to imply that there is any certainty of immediate danger. We may have six or seven years in which to make ready our defences, and if those defences are adequate the country should be saved from a disastrous war. If, on the other hand, the danger is not faced, and carefully prepared for, then Japan will be able to carry through her ambitions.

Could Australia hope for help from England or any other power? A war between England and another European power would give Japan a good opportunity to carry through her designs in the East, and such a war may occur any day. After such a war it is unlikely that England could send adequate help to Australia.

But even without such a war the continual recurrence of 'strained relations' in Europe makes it impossible for England to send to Australia a Fleet which could meet Japan's Battle Fleet on equal terms. Japan in 1920 may have about 27 Dreadnoughts, and is now said to possess a Mercantile Marine capable of transporting an army of 200,000 men fully equipped in one flotilla!

British ships stationed at the Cape, in the East Indies, China and New Zealand would undoubtedly help; but in the case of an European war, would be largely occupied with other matters than the defence of Australia.

Then this huge continent, with its comparatively small population, great length of coastline, and many harbours would have to rely almost entirely on its own people for defence. Is such a defence reasonably possible?

I believe it is, but it must be based on:-

1. A clear understanding of the dangers.
2. A carefully considered Naval and Military war plan based on the dangers.
3. A ship-building programme based absolutely on this war plan.
4. Manning, training, tactical and strategical plans also based on this war plan.
5. Bases arranged to meet the strategic considerations of this war plan.
6. A knowledge of home waters possessed by the Officers of the ships.

I have already outlined the general dangers which I conceive to exist. I now wish to examine a little more the forms of attack which the Japanese might adopt. They may:—

1. Attack in force the centres of civilisation with the intention of conquering the whole country.
2. Seize a part of the country and hold it.

The army organisation, the fortified ports, the internal communications make (1) a vast undertaking. The land, being largely taken up, could not easily or cheaply be held by a conquering nation. Japan would scarcely be likely to exterminate the population! But if a part of the country were held in force the Japanese fleet could stop all coastwise and sea trade, and could probably extort terms later.

#### *Consideration of probable points of attack by Japan*

The Southern and Eastern parts of Australia give no strategic command of the Asiatic trade or territories. Nor does Western Australia. Queensland and Papua (particularly if oil is found there in large quantities) would be valuable to Japan. Conceive that Japan has seized Fiji as a base. It is practically equidistant from New Zealand, Queensland and Papua and they may descend on any one of them. Thus the defence of New Zealand is one and the same problem as the defence of Australia.

#### *Northern Territory most valuable to Japan*

Again, if Japan seizes the Northern Territory, Papua and Queensland could be taken by her at any time. Once established in the Northern Territory she commands the whole position, and the trade routes to Asiatic ports. Everything points to the Northern Territory, Papua, the Solomon Islands, Torres Straits and some harbours inside the Barrier Reef as the theatre of operations of the Fleet in war and our attention must be concentrated there.

#### *Possible nature of attack*

If Japan were attacking the Northern Territory they would probably station vessels to the East or North of Papua, attempt to seize Torres Straits, destroy any Australian ships in Territory waters; and they could then safely send their troop-ships, the Australian Fleet being cut off from access to Northern Territory waters.

### *Means of defence*

Having outlined some forms of attack, let us look to the defence. Australia cannot build and man a fleet capable of meeting that of Japan on the high seas. Happily modern science has placed at our disposal two machines excellently adapted for defensive warfare. These are the submarine and water-plane (to act as eyes for the submarines). To these must be added destroyers for night work, cruisers both light and battle, for observing the enemy's movements, and the necessary auxiliary craft such as colliers, oil fuel ships, store-ships, parent ships for submarines, small cruisers to act with submarines, mine-laying vessels, and so on.

Japan's weakness lies in her long line of communications. The speed of a convoy is slow. Wireless telegraphy both ashore and afloat would almost certainly give warning of the approach of an expedition.

### *Use of Fleet*

Australia's battle-cruisers should be able to push through the screen of the enemy's light-cruisers and see what is behind them, her light-cruisers could pass on the news, aeroplanes would give warning of nearer approach; and the torpedo flotillas, stationed primarily in the North, should be able to concentrate at the threatened points, or other favourable spots for attack.

A well organised defence of this nature would make an attack by Japan an extremely hazardous operation. It should be possible to damage the convoy and to inform the Army of their movements in time to admit of the concentration of troops at the threatened point. Bomb dropping by water-planes on troop-ships may be a strong deterrent.

The great length of Australia's coast line makes it essential that the torpedo flotillas and the ships of the Fleet should be mobile. The torpedo flotillas must practically carry their bases with them. The Fleet must have colliers and oil vessels chartered permanently in peace time. Such craft *cannot be obtained* when relations become strained on account of the necessity for taking no action of an offensive nature or even of a nature likely to attract comment.

The above suggests in general terms the nature of defence I conceive to be possible.

### *Building programme must be based on strategy*

It is essential that the building programme should be based on the scheme or great waste of public money is liable to occur. For example, suppose

Australia built or bought a battleship. A battleship can only fight against battleships, as other craft can run away from her. Japan by 1920 will probably possess 27 battleships. Australia would therefore have to build not less than 27 by 1920 if Japan is to be the enemy, and the battleship is to be used. No other nation in the East has battleships. There are, of course, many other reasons against the building of battleships but the above may suffice. There are similar reasons against various types of cruisers.

If then a policy and war plan are decided on the ship-building programme must be based on them. Similarly with the establishment of bases.

### *Outline of strategy*

For the defence of Australia and New Zealand the *Naval Frontier* may be considered to be the line Singapore, Java, Timor, Papua, Solomon Islands, Fiji. On this line we should attack the enemy.

Cruisers and torpedo craft working from Bynoe Harbour and Singapore should watch the straits between Melville Island and Singapore. A Torpedo flotilla should hold Torres Straits.

Cruisers and Torpedo craft from South-East corner of Papua and the Solomon Islands should watch the passage to the East. When the enemy becomes committed to an attack either to the East or West the Fleet should be concentrated on that side, passing through Torres Straits.

### *Bases required by strategical conditions*

I am of opinion that two principal war bases should be established and fortified. One should be at Bynoe Harbour (near Port Darwin). This harbour appears to be admirably suited for the purpose. The other should be at the S.E end of Papua or in the Solomon Islands. Let us call this 'Base A'.

Torres Straits must be held by a Torpedo Flotilla. Our Fleet should be stationed at Bynoe Harbour and at 'Base A'. Torres Straits would be the line of communication between the two.

### *Effect of strategy*

Let us see the effect of this. Japan could not attack Western Australia whilst our fleet was stationed at Bynoe Harbour, and acting on her lines of communication. She must first destroy this fleet, thus we impose our conditions of warfare on her.

Nor could she attack Southern or Eastern Australia or New Zealand with an Australian fleet stationed at 'Base A' and acting on her lines of

communications. Here again she must accept the conditions of warfare imposed by us.

If the attack was clearly developing to the Eastward all our force, except perhaps the Torres Straits guard, could move East to 'Base A'. Similarly if the attack was to the West our fleet could move to Bynoe Harbour or to Torres Straits.

Such a plan not only protects the exposed Northern Territory, Papua, &c., but, I believe, it offers the best means of concentrating our Naval Forces for the protection of the whole of Australia and of New Zealand.

### *Summary of proposed strategy*

The coast line of Australia is so long that it cannot be protected by small units scattered round it. Such a method would be radically wrong, concentration of force being the basis of strategy.

Briefly, the scheme proposed imposes on the enemy the necessity of attacking us in one of two or three definite spots, chosen by us, where we can concentrate our forces. This is imposed on the enemy by the necessity of annihilating a naval force established on his line of communications. If these bases are strong enough to hold out for some months against a Japanese attack (as Port Arthur did) it is not impossible that Germany might 'bury the hatchet', and come to an agreement with England under which a fleet could be sent out. Germany might even make common cause with England and send out a combined fleet to make an end of the 'Yellow Peril'.

But such a combination could scarcely be hoped for until the danger had sufficiently developed to stir Europe, and the strength of the local defence had shown the probability of a successful issue. The fate of Admiral Rozhdestvensky's fleet has not been forgotten.

For this purpose the examination of several harbours, by a surveying ship, is necessary. Port Moresby is too far to the Westward but may well be used until a better base can be decided on and fortified. 'Base A' should be held by native troops but for the defence of Bynoe Harbour a garrison is required and it is imperative that the railway from Port Darwin should be connected to the Queensland system. Until this is done the defence of the Northern Territory is, I think, impossible.

### *Building of submarines*

Arrangements should be made for building submarines in Australia. Bringing such craft out from England is a costly and somewhat hazardous operation. I would strongly recommend that, as suggested by

Mr J.W. Barrett, the English firms which build sub-marines should be asked to tender for the construction of a building yard in the most economically situated defended port in Australia; and should also be asked to build submarines and destroyers out here until officials could be trained to the work, and to take over the yard for the Government. This small yard should form the nucleus of a Government building yard.

It is probable that a special type of submarine is required for Australasian work.

### *Immediate requirements of present Fleet*

Two immediate requirements of the Fleet are a collier and an oil-carrying steamer. These should, I think, be chartered as soon as possible, for without them our force is immobile.

### *War Staff Required at Navy Office*

A small Department is urgently needed at the Navy Office to carry out the War Staff work. This Department could also advise on Gunnery, Torpedo and other Technical matters.

Arrangements should be made with the Home Authorities for the supply of all the information, received by them, concerning Japan, China, the movements of war and merchant vessels in Eastern waters and also the war orders of the China, East Indies and Cape Squadrons. The Department would then supply the information to the Commander-in-Chief of the Australian Fleet.

The Department would also be the head of the Intelligence system. Such a Department is urgently required in order that the Commander-in-Chief may be able to make the best use of the forces at his disposal.

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### 3. *Letter to the Reverend W. Hall:*<sup>1</sup> *education of naval officers*

Navy Office  
Melbourne  
30 November 1914

Your letter raises an important question to which I feel I can scarcely attempt to do justice at the present time. My opinion is that the teaching of naval history at the College should have the following objects:—

1. To put into the boys the spirit of the British Navy.
2. To give an outline of modern naval history showing how our present system of naval stations all over the world has been built up, and the use and object of these stations.
3. To teach the influence that naval power has had on the history of the maritime powers of the world.

1. is best taught by taking a few examples of how the personnel has fought and thought. The ‘Nelson touch’ is most important. Until Nelson showed that naval battles should end in complete destruction of the enemy’s fleet, indecisive actions, which each side claimed as victories, were the rule. Nelson’s fleet in the Mediterranean was not content until every single French ship which was present at the Battle of the Nile was captured or destroyed.

2. would show how the British Empire rests on a sea power carefully constructed to be world wide, to keep the seas open for our commerce or transport of troops. The influence of the old ‘Navigation laws’, in deliberately building up sea power would introduce this study. (See Mahan *The American war of 1812*.)

3. would briefly trace sea power beginning with the Phoenician search for shells, the defeat of Xerxes fleet, the rise of Carthage, how Hannibal had to land in Spain to attack Italy because of the Roman fleet, the rise of Roman sea power, Venetian sea power, the Mohammedan attempt at sea power defeated at Lepanto, Spanish sea power, Netherlands power, English and French power. How Spanish and French used their power for secondary objects instead of attacking the sea power of the enemy. Their consequent defeat.

I should incline to take (2) only for examination purposes. Perhaps (3) might also be used.

The idea would be to give a groundwork on which the strategical study of campaigns might be built later, and to so interest the boys that they would themselves study questions. Boys should understand that they must, as naval officers, learn in due course not only general principles of sea

<sup>1</sup> Revd William Hall (1867–?), Chaplain and Chief Naval Instructor RANC 1913–16.

power (this is sufficient for the journalist) but, as experts, they must know on what such principles rest, so that they may know when they should be applied and when disregarded.

You must understand that this is a hurriedly expressed opinion on a great subject, and a subject I am greatly interested in. I think we should go for broad treatment. I should be glad to discuss the question with you & Mr Eldridge<sup>1</sup> if it could be arranged.

4. *Minute to Rear Admiral W. R. Creswell: potential attack on Australian trade routes*

4 February 1916

The attack on shipping in the neighbourhood of the Canary Islands shows that the Germans have again taken to attacks on trade routes by craft other than submarines. The importance of the transport and trade routes in Australian waters might well decide the Germans to attempt an attack in these waters.

Our cruisers and destroyers have examined the Islands and the Dutch East Indies fairly thoroughly, thus to a large extent reducing the danger of an attack being organised from those parts. The principal danger now appears to be from craft, either mine layers or armed merchant vessels escaping from Germany or being fitted out on the coast of North or South America.

Our ships have now been allowed to operate in distant seas for some time. I suggest that it would be reasonable to ask the Admiralty to let the *Encounter*, *Pioneer*,<sup>2</sup> *Psyche*,<sup>3</sup> *Fantome* and destroyers return to Australia and that we should put in force for a time a Trade Route protection scheme. If this were done at once we should probably be ready by the time an attack took place. If no attack came our preparedness would probably be known and have a good effect and we should have gained very useful experience. An outline of proposed organisation for the protection of Trade Routes is attached.

I would suggest that a cable on the following lines should be submitted to the Government for consideration:—

‘Admiralty. In view of importance of Australian transport and trade routes and that situation in Bay of Bengal and Southern China Station has cleared government suggest desirable to recall *Encounter*

<sup>1</sup>Frank Burgess Eldridge (1888–1961), Naval Instructor RANC 1914–23.

<sup>2</sup>HMAS *Pioneer*: third class cruiser, 1900; 2,200 tons; 8×4in, 8×3pdrs; 2tt; 16 knots.

<sup>3</sup>HMAS *Psyche*: third class cruiser, 1900; 2,135 tons; 8×4in, 8×3pdrs; 2tt; 16 knots.

*Pioneer Psyche Fantome Una*<sup>1</sup> and destroyers to Australian waters. Enemy may have decided to attack our trade routes because unprotected. Renewal of attack by enemy above water craft suggests danger here will culminate in few weeks time. Desire to establish system with armed patrol craft and above mentioned ships. System to be kept in force for period until danger seems passed. Would be glad if *Otranto*<sup>2</sup> may be included in scheme when ready.<sup>3</sup>

### *Attack on Trade Routes*

#### *(1) Mine Layer*

D.N.O's [District Naval Officers] have been given instructions as to routes to be followed by shipping if an attack of this nature is anticipated.

Mine Sweeping Services have been provided at Sydney and Melbourne. Craft have been selected for the duty and some officers and men have been trained.

More stores would have to be ordered and more training undertaken.

#### *(2) By an Armed Merchant Cruiser*

The vessel would probably carry a large coal supply. She might operate on one trade route for a day or two and then go to another. The problem would be to locate the attacking ship in time to enable her to be attacked.

A ship operating on a trade route might only be heard of by ships becoming overdue. It would then be too late to look for her on that route. If she confined her attack to ships outward bound on a long journey many days might elapse before any suspicion of the attack was received.

Merchant vessels are given courses which scatter them widely when they are well out to sea. Thus an attack on a route either near a Port or a regular 'land fall' is more probable than an attack far out at sea. This to some extent localises the danger areas and suggests methods of protection.

The suggested method is to station Patrol Vessels on certain fixed beats. It is, of course, difficult for Patrol Vessels to preserve their position with

<sup>1</sup>HMAS *Una*: colonial sloop, 1914; 1,438 tons; 3×4in, 2×12pdrs; 16 knots.

<sup>2</sup>HMS *Otranto*: Armed Merchant Cruiser, 1909; 12,128 tons; 4×4.7in.

<sup>3</sup>The Admiralty's response noted that the Japanese had been invited to send a cruiser squadron to the Indian Ocean to assist in protecting trade routes; that three British cruisers were being concentrated in Colombo; and, that another invitation to the Japanese to patrol the Malacca Strait would enable the Australian destroyers there to return home. *Pioneer*, *Psyche* and *Fantome* were not recommended for the patrol scheme as their guns would be outranged by the German raider then at large.

sufficient accuracy to ensure ships meeting them. Whenever possible this difficulty would be overcome by instructing the vessel to make some point of land, etc., once in each day. Ships would be instructed to meet the patrol vessel at a certain point on her patrol. As the length of her patrol might be from 50 or 100 miles the point of meeting would depend on the time the vessel would cross the patrol line. Thus a divergence in route followed by shipping would be obtained.

Suppose a Patrol Vessel were stationed to patrol from the Leeuwin to 50' W from the Cape. A W.T. signal from Perth made at a fixed hour daily would inform this vessel of all ships which should speak [to] her during the next 24 hours. If these vessels, or several of them, did not arrive it would be pretty certain that there was an attack between their last port or place last sighted, and that patrol. A Cruiser from Perth, Albany, or from a patrol position would be so informed.

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5. *Minute to Rear Admiral W. R. Creswell: potential submarine attack*

27 November 1917

It is possible that the Germans might decide to send a submarine to operate in these waters. Some supply craft would probably be sent through the North Sea to the Atlantic first, there to be met by the submarine.

We have no defence against a submarine, no patrol craft, no Destroyers, sea-planes, depth charges, net, booms etc.

It would not be reasonable to keep a Destroyer force here in case a submarine should be sent, but operations against a submarine could not be undertaken until they arrived, a period of perhaps two months.

We should be unable to say where the submarine would appear next and it might be necessary to lock up ships in our ports to a large extent when her whereabouts was unknown.

I submit that the Government should understand the position in order that preparations be made to lessen the difficulties which a cessation of sea communications would create.

6. *Minute To Rear Admiral W. R. Creswell: protection against submarines*

19 March 1918

PROTECTION OF SHIPPING AGAINST SUBMARINES IN  
AUSTRALIAN WATERS

Submitted

2. The degree of protection which is necessary or desirable here is a matter for Board consideration.

3. The provision of such devices as booms, minefields, magnetophones, submerged nets for forcing submarines to the surface and hydroplanes for observation purposes are all costly and possibly not necessary under present conditions.

4. There are other methods of protection which could be adopted and which would also be of use in watching for and possibly in evading armed raiders or minelayers.

5. Coastal vessels should perhaps be instructed in zigzagging and in the advantages of hugging the shore and keeping within the seven fathom line as methods of evading principally submarines, but to some extent, raiders.

6. Escorting slower vessels by armed trawlers or armed small craft has proved most satisfactory and could probably be adopted.

7. Devices such as painting of ships, bracing yards forward and other methods of disguising the course of the vessel are also useful and simple.

8. I would suggest that it is desirable to take advantage of the newly established control of coastal shipping to prepare some of the faster and more suitable vessels for service either as patrol vessels or for convoying against submarines.

9. Without taking these vessels away from their work it should be possible to fit them either with guns or to take guns, to provide guns crews for them and to commission them, if necessary, by having on each of the coast two or three vessels. Thus prepared it is probable that one of them would be quickly available to mount her guns, if kept ashore, and to proceed on service.

10. A few guns are now available and I think it may be possible to obtain a few more from Military Authorities.

11. As an example, the *Loongana* running between Melbourne and Launceston is a fast vessel and would readily be available for work in Bass Straits, which is perhaps the area most likely to attract the enemy's

attentions. The *Loongana* would have sufficient speed to run away from a heavily armed raider and could be used to watch the Straits in case a mine-layer, raider or submarine was expected.

12. Other vessels which appear to be suitable are the *Hunter*, *Pulganbar*, and *Orara*. Probably the Shipping Board could suggest others.

13. In connection with this proposal I would submit that the question of manning the Mercantile Marine should be considered by the Naval Board.

14. I attach a paper I wrote on this subject in November 1917, and I have in my possession a number of letters containing remarks on that paper, and a good deal of other information on the subject, which is available if the Board wishes to consider it.

15. The control of the Mercantile Marine of Australasia by the Shipping Board appears to afford a most favorable opportunity for beginning a systematic organisation for training and entry of officers and men into the Mercantile Marine.

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#### 7. *Letter to Lieutenant Commander J. G. Latham: peace issues*

12 November 1918

I feel very guilty in the matter of writing to you. I am a bad letter writer and I have always been expecting that you would return before my letter would get to you.

I am very sorry to hear that Cook has been so difficult in the matter of the Admiralty and the F.O. [Foreign Office] I am trying to get the Government here to tell him to get into close & regular communication with them. Schutt,<sup>1</sup> Piesse & I were to have dined with Watt last night to impress on him the necessity for getting full and accurate information about Chinese, Jap & other Pacific affairs, for use at the peace conference. Unfortunately Watt had to put us off because of the expected news of the signing of the armistice. We shall make another attempt as the matter is so important.

Could you not meet Admiral Hall<sup>2</sup> again? I believe he is keen about Australian affairs. The Admiralty have left out the psychological factor

<sup>1</sup>Hon. Lt. Cdr William John Schutt, RANB, War Staff and Intelligence Branch, Navy Office 1918–19.

<sup>2</sup>Adm. Sir William Reginald Hall, RN (1870–1943), Director of Intelligence Division, Admiralty 1914–18.

in studying the question of Dominion navies. And that is the most important factor. I believe that, in a spirit of healthy rivalry, the other Dominions are rather jealous of the progress made by Australia. The system of Dominion navies is bound to make good.

There is as yet no secretary appointed to the Defence Council and that body is therefore not working efficiently yet. There is a good deal of acrimonious bickering about the Aviation Service. We recommend a separate service, under its own Minister, with a view to getting the biggest results from the money available. The C.G.S. (Legge<sup>1</sup>) won't have that & has put up a very amateurish scheme of which even his own aviators do not approve. The Defence Council apparently don't know enough to come to a decision & are playing with the question.

I had a bit of a break down in July & and had to be away for nearly two months. The Drs say that I shall break down permanently unless I have a change. I applied to go to sea & by dint of an ultimatum that I should resign unless permitted to do so I at last carried my point. I must have some sea service if I am to remain efficient.

I am going to *Encounter* on Nov. 25th & and am very glad to be doing so.

At present I am trying hard to square things up as much work as possible before going. Capt Hyde relieves me as D.W.S. & Capt Stevenson<sup>2</sup> will take on temporarily my ordnance work & several special subjects including a scheme at which I have been working for training of officers & men of the Merchant Service & putting that service on a better footing, evicting the Aliens. I have recommended a common entry for Navy and Merchant Service but the whole subject wants close examination.

Schutt has been doing fine work & so has Bavin.<sup>3</sup> We have also Pearce<sup>4</sup> and Beeby<sup>5</sup> who are working through all the services we have controlled with a view to using the experience & drawing up orders for such services in the next war.

<sup>1</sup>Lt.-Gen. James Gordon Legge (1863–1947), Australian Chief of the General Staff 1914–15, 1917–1920.

<sup>2</sup>Capt. (later RA) John Bryan Stevenson, RAN (1876–1957), commanded HMAS *Encounter* 1916–18; Navy Office 1918–20.

<sup>3</sup>Hon. Lt. Cdr (later Sir) Thomas Rainsford Bavin, RANB (1874–1941), Member NSW Legislative Assembly 1917–35; War Staff, Navy Office 1918–19.

<sup>4</sup>Hon. Lt. William Bastion Pearce, RANB (1891–1939), Navy Office 1918–19.

<sup>5</sup>Hon. Sub-Lt. Edward Augustus Beeby, RANB, War Staff, Navy Office 1918–19.

8. *Letter to C. H. Rodwell, High Commissioner for the Western Pacific, Suva: naval deployments*

HMAS *Encounter*  
at Suva  
29 November 1918

My sailing orders require me to take all possible steps to keep the influenza infection out of the ship. I greatly regret that these orders prevent me from having the honour to report myself personally to you.

2. The Medical Relief Force which we are carrying to Samoa is under the command of Surgeon Temple Grey, R.A.N.<sup>1</sup> Included in the force are 7 Military Surgeons under Major Alexander, 31 Army Medical Corps ratings, and 3 Naval ratings. Lieutenant Roberts of the New Zealand Expeditionary Force is attached to the expedition, his knowledge of Samoa and the native language should prove most useful to the expedition.

3. I attach a message I have sent to Samoa which will give your Excellency some knowledge of the expedition and its organisation.

4. I hope to land this party with their stores and provisions (if required) at Apia on Tuesday, December 3rd. After receiving a report of the conditions then obtaining in the Islands, I propose to return to Suva, where a collier will meet me.

5. The Officers and men of the expedition have been very contented with their life on board this ship, and I feel sure they will work both keenly and efficiently in Samoa.

6. Your Excellency informed the Navy Office, Melbourne, some weeks ago that there was trouble in the Gilbert Islands which might render the presence of a man-of-war there advisable. I am desired by the Naval Board to report to you the possibilities of Naval assistance and to advise the Board as to what action is desirable. I am unaware of the nature of the trouble, but the following appear to be the alternatives.

(a) *Encounter* to visit the Islands. Collier *Kanna* could accompany her. – This would be expensive, the *Encounter* is not well suited for such work and the services of the two vessels would be taken up for some weeks, neither vessel can well be spared for the work.

(b) *Fantome* could go if coal were provided either from Ocean Island or sent from Australia in a Burns Philp steamer towards the end of December. – This involves some delay, and the health of *Fantome's* ship's company may make it undesirable to send her.

<sup>1</sup> Surgeon Francis Temple Grey, temporary RAN, 1918–19.

(c) *Una* could be sent from Rabaul, via Nauru, or Ocean Island – This seems to be the easiest and, perhaps most satisfactory arrangement if no large landing force is required.

7. I should be glad if your Excellency would let me have your views on this matter, either by cypher W.T. message from *Fantome* or by letter on my return to Suva.

8. If I can, within the limit of my orders, be of any service to your Excellency in the severe trials which your people are now undergoing, please command me.

9. I regret exceedingly that circumstances prevent me from having the advantage of discussing this and other matters connected with naval affairs in the Western Pacific with your Excellency.

# 9. Letter to Commodore F. C. Dreyer: briefing information

Personal and Confidential.

S.S. Dunera

Singapore to Colombo

24 February 1919

I was very glad to see in the papers that you are coming out as C.O.S. to Admiral Jellicoe. You have a vast problem to tackle, on which I have been working for six years, & wish I could have met you on your arrival in Australia as I could probably have cleared some of the ground for you and put you onto the right people. The politicians, heads of Departments & other pushing people who you will naturally meet are pretty useless for your purposes but I will try to indicate a few good people later.

I was at Darwin in the *Encounter* 3 weeks ago when I suddenly got orders to go to England to take over command of the *Brisbane* & bring her out. My wife and 3 small children were living near Melbourne and are leaving for England at the end of this month. We have been in Australia for 6 years so I hope I shall have at least long enough in England to meet my wife and to see something of my people. As my wife will have to stay for some time in England there are many things to arrange. Still I hope I shall be back in Australia before your flying visit is over.

When I arrived in Australia I found that no Department was collecting any information about Japan, China or the Pacific; in fact no one was taking any interest in things outside Australia. I set to work to collect information & by taking in newspapers, reading books and meeting everyone from those parts who could tell me things I have managed to learn a certain amount. Dr Morrison, one of the advisers to the Chinese Government, and perhaps the best informed white man on Eastern

Questions was lately in Melbourne and helped me much. In the past year or two Major Piesse D.M.I. (Melb) has been working with me and he is the best man there for you to get hold of for information about China and Japan.

There is a military officer on board this ship, who has been for the last 18 months in Shantung Province buying mules, who will be in Bombay whilst you are there. You should *make a point of* getting hold of him (unofficially at first) for he can give you accurate information of the doings of the Japs in China (at present the key of the Pacific problem). His information is entirely confirmed by Dr Morrison & other authorities. Name & address – Capt. A.G. Defries, 8th Cavalry c/o Grindley & Co. Bombay. Unfortunately, as you probably know, our Ambassador in China is a nonentity & F.O. reports are likely to be of little value.

I don't suppose I need impress on you the importance of the Pacific Problem. Now that Germany is at least temporarily disabled Japan remains as the sole nation with a militarist policy. History gives us countless instances of the results which follow the action of a virile military people with a clear policy when surrounded by non militant but commercially rich people.

I cannot, in a letter, follow the various developments of Japanese policy in the last few years, their doings in Java, the Philippines, their attempts in the Malay peninsula, their 'to the South' doctrine. The entry of America into the war produced an immediate change in their ideas and since then they have concentrated in China. Of course you know how the Japanese hate the British, who are their great rivals in the East, and how they teach in their schools that Japan overcame the strongest military nation in the world (Russia) and that no one can stand against her. Japan's policy is governed by two principles,

a. Asia for the Asiatics. This presupposes that Japan will lead and it includes India, Malaya, Dutch E.I., Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific Islands.

b. Room for the surplus population of Japan. The Japs will not go into Korea, Manchuria or other cold climates. Australia is their natural outlet. They are now emigrating in considerable numbers to Brazil, but this is not satisfactory as their emigrants are lost to them as subjects. Japan hoped that the war would end in stalemate or the downfall of the British Empire and they were prepared to act. Now they have concentrated on China. They have the principal iron mines in their control already; coal fields and many of the German undertakings are passing into their hands, ostensibly bought by private individuals. They are penetrating everywhere in the North of China.

You will have the text of the 21 demands. For my purposes it is only necessary to mention their demands for control of the Chinese arsenals, for the raising and training of an army of 250,000 Chinese under Jap officers, to be joined by an army of 250,000 Japs to put down the various insurrections in China. The Japs penetrate to remote villages disguised as Chinese, and can probably at any time stir up enough trouble to give them an excuse for sending an army to safeguard Japanese interests.

The overseas trade in the Pacific is rapidly falling into the hands of the Japs & they are establishing themselves everywhere. The Japs are establishing a considerable morphia traffic in China. They are said to have over 20,000 men in Shanghai who could be armed tomorrow and over a quarter of a million in the N. of China. If Japan willed it trouble might break out at any time now and the Peace Conference might wake up one fine morning to find the Yangtse valley and all N. China in the Japs hands. I have not enough information to estimate the probability of this.

Now a few words about Australia. The country is divided into two parties: Liberal and Labour. Both live on promises made in opposition and which they cannot carry out when in office. The Politicians and the Press are always stirring up strife between the parties. Each misrepresents the other and can never see any good in the others views. The natural end is civil war. Queensland and the Northern Territory are ripe for it now, and N.S. [New South] Wales is not far off.

Hughes is distrusted by both parties and Watt is the only politician now in Australia who counts. He is fairly strong and has some initiative but is hopelessly overworked.

You may take it that Australia is determined to have a Navy of its own, and I see no reason why such a force should not be fitted into an Imperial scheme and become a useful part of it. The Politicians would prefer a Navy Office running large works ashore, employing many voters and giving opportunities for putting men who are useful to them into jobs. The ships and their doings they look on as nuisances. They are of little value to party politics. (They will not tell you this)

The N. [Naval] Secretary (Macandie, a decent man but uneducated)<sup>1</sup> and the Director of N. Accounts (Abercrombie)<sup>2</sup> have exactly the above view and they work together. I think more trouble is stirred up in the ships by bad, slow and unsympathetic work in the Accounts Department than by anything else. The only sea training the 1st [Creswell] and 3rd [Clarkson]<sup>3</sup> Naval Members have had was as Captain and Chief Engineer of the

<sup>1</sup>George Lionel Macandie (1877–1968), Naval Secretary, Navy Office 1914–46.

<sup>2</sup>Ralph Abercrombie, Director of Navy Accounts, Navy Office 1918–38.

<sup>3</sup>Engineer RA (later VA) Sir William Clarkson, RAN (1859–1934), 3rd Naval Member ACNB 1911–22.

*Protector*. Neither of them knows anything of Navy affairs. The 3rd N.M. is a clever and able man but he should be removed from the Navy. Cochrane<sup>1</sup> has excellent intention but he is too weak. Hoare<sup>2</sup> is a good man. I know nothing of Hyde who relieved me in part of my work. Stevenson who looks over the rest is quite good but lazy. As a result of Gordon Smith's<sup>3</sup> policy when 2nd N.M. there will be scarcely any Australian personnel left at the end of the war and no provision has been made for training by artificers &c. He was quite aware that this would be the result.

The Naval Board is entirely out of touch with the seagoing service and if the recommendations of the Royal Commission are carried out it will become more so. They (the Board) have been engaged in fastening millstones around the neck of the Australian Navy, yet I am sure it possesses sufficient virility to pull through if the thing is taken in hand soon.

When you have got a grip of the historical, political and geographical situation in the Pacific you will no doubt tackle the strategical situation present and future with a view to estimating the quantity and nature of forces. I have written various papers on the strategical situation with regard to Australasia, bases, forces, etc and will not recapitulate. I have not enough information about the lessons of war to offer any remarks as to forces.

The chief naval base in Australia will have to be removed from Sydney. P[ort] Stephens is the best available alternative for many reasons altho it is not strategically perfect. The proposal to construct now a big naval base at Cockburn Sound near Fremantle should be at once squashed. The natural development of a commercial port there will, with a little guidance, fulfil all requirements there. The Naval College at Jervis Bay is too exposed. Any passing ship can destroy it. The Naval Depot should not be placed up a creek in Western Port but we must make the best of it if it cannot be used for other purposes.

The scheme of deferred pay should be done away with. I have recently written some remarks on manning, training etc which you can get from the Navy Office if you want them.

Now as to the future. The correct solution appears to have a sufficient Imperial force, supplied by India, Malaya, Australia, New Zealand and Canada, stationed in the Pacific to wage with the help of an American Squadron a defensive warfare, until America and Great Britain could send forces to enable an offensive war to be undertaken. To my mind the combination with America is essential.

<sup>1</sup>Capt. Henry Lake Cochrane, RN (1871–1939), 2nd Naval Member ACNB 1917–19.

<sup>2</sup>Fleet Paymaster Robert Richard Hoare, RN (1878–?), Navy Office 1917–19.

<sup>3</sup>Capt. (later VA) Arthur Gordon-Smith, RN (1873–1953), 2nd Naval Member ACNB 1914–17.

The bases, sources of supplies, ammunition etc must be capable of expansion to the requirements of the larger force. Jealousy between Dominions must be recognized and guarded against. I think a sort of sub-Admiralty (Imperial) should be established in the Pacific, almost certainly at Sydney, to control all operations and peace training; to do all staff work, with ample powers for inspecting the dominion establishments and advising the Governments. Each Dominion could have a navy office somewhat similar in function to the London Navy office when it was distinct from the Admiralty, to furnish and supply the ships and men.

For local trouble in China, Hong Kong would be the base. But for more general Pacific work the base (principal) would almost certainly have to be on the East coast of Australia (P. Stephens).

The early part of the war in the Pacific proved once more the old lesson that operations cannot be controlled from a distance. There must be no chance in the future of the Admiralty trying to control operations in the Pacific except in the most general terms.

Of secondary bases and plans for manning them I have written elsewhere. I have either examined or obtained local information about most of the ports in the southern Pacific.

I came across an old letter from you the other day in which you accused me (no doubt falsely) of never answering letters. This letter should make up for old shortcomings!

I have spent nearly 12 years in the Pacific (Pacific Station, China twice & Australia) & have been studying with fair facilities this Pacific problem for the last 6 years so I am naturally interested. I hope you will not think I am alarmist in my views for that will argue want of information on your part.

I suppose you will have several Pacific experts on your staff. It is important that their knowledge should be up to date as much has changed in the last year. I would suggest that you send at least four out to the countries whose languages they speak, attached to insurance or other commercial firms, for at least six months. At the end of that time they should be able to give you useful information.

You could make an immediate test of Japan's present intentions in China by sending to Tsing Tao and getting hold of the British Consul there who is said to be a good man and well informed. Also by sending to Shanghai and getting hold of some of the principal merchants, bankers, Insurance companies etc and hearing their views. Of course the enquirer must be a competent person. I met Fisher (Flag Captain)<sup>1</sup> at Singapore

<sup>1</sup>Capt. (later VA) Frederick Charles Fisher, RN (1877-1958), CSO (and Flag Captain) to C.-in-C. China 1917-19.

but as he was in a state of blissful ignorance about the Japs and Pacific affairs generally I did not disturb him.

I have had to make rather bald statements in this letter because of the immensity of the subject. You will be able to test those you want to. Also I have had to make apparently bitter remarks about senior officers. Whatever scheme is brought in will depend for success on the qualities of the officers who administer it so the matter is very important.

'For forms of government let fools contest

What e'er is best administered is best.'

Would you recall me to the remembrance of Admiral Jellicoe? He has probably forgotten me. I shall hope to have the honour and pleasure of paying my respects to him before he leaves Australia.

Could you send me a cable, say to Port Said or London, to let me know you have received this letter?

Good luck to you and your mission.

#### 10. *Letter to Lieutenant Commander J. G. Latham: activities in England*

Mill Edge  
Aldeburgh, Suffolk  
31 May 1919

I ought to have written to you to tell you of my interviews &c at the Admiralty. My excuse must be that the Dr told me to laze as much as possible. I am much better & the Dr says I ought to be as well as ever in six months so that is quite satisfactory. I expect to leave for Australia in the third week in June to resume, I hope, the command of the *Brisbane* but definite arrangements have not yet been made. I have much to do before leaving but will try to see Dewar<sup>1</sup> and Howarth.<sup>2</sup> The wife of the latter is a friend of my wife's. Dewar told me about the report you mention and Admiralty people are pretty furious about its fate.

I had a day at the Admiralty on Apr 25 and saw Admiral Browning and quite a lot of people. I had a long talk with Instructor Commander Rayment<sup>3</sup> who is their specialist on Japan. His information agreed well with mine and much of mine has been confirmed by the Morning Post's special correspondent, especially about Japanese activity in China and their morphia traffic. Instructor Commander R. could not see that the occupation

<sup>1</sup>Capt. (later VA) Kenneth Gilbert Balmain Dewar, RN (1879–1964), Assistant Director Plans Division, Admiralty 1917–20.

<sup>2</sup>Unidentified.

<sup>3</sup>Instructor Cdr Guy V. Rayment, RN, Naval Intelligence Division, Admiralty 1914–21.

of the Carolines by Japan held any disadvantages for Australia, a point of view so startling that I had prepared few arguments to refute it.

With regard to the interchange of N. Int [Naval Intelligence] the Admiralty are prepared to recommend that a representative of each Dominion Navy should be appointed to serve at the Admiralty on the General Staff. Possibly they have already made the recommendation. Nothing could be better than this. As you know the relations in London are now very similar to those between ourselves and Major [Sir George] Steward.

Everyone I met spoke well of Admiral Grant<sup>1</sup> & were pleased at his appointment but there was equal unanimity against appointments to the seagoing squadron & they held little hope of success there.

\* \* \*

This afternoon I am to lecture to the Girls School on 'The story of the sea in History' & am rather nervous about it!

# 11. *Report to the Naval Secretary: Japan and Britain's alliance*

22 May 1920

## INTELLIGENCE REPORT JAPAN AND THE ALLIANCE

\* \* \*

Our alliance with Japan continues automatically until one year after it is denounced by one of the parties to it. A definite act is therefore required to terminate it. We want:—

1. Insurance for all British possessions in the East.
2. A safeguard against Japan combining against us with Russia, or with Russia and Germany.
3. Insurance for our Oriental commerce.
4. To secure the peaceful development of China, Korea and other Eastern countries.

It seems almost certain that for these purposes we shall have to renew the Alliance. (This statement is founded solely on an interview I had with

<sup>1</sup>RA (later Adm.) Sir Edmund Percy Grant, RN (1867–1952), 1st Naval Member ACNB 1919–21.

Dr Morrison (Adviser to the Chinese Government). An account of that interview is in the Confidential Intelligence Records at the Navy Office & the statement could be verified or negatived by reference to that account.) If we can combine the Alliance with a good understanding with America far greater security should be attained.

It is probable that under a loose Alliance with Japan we could exercise a greater restraining influence on her than if there was no such alliance or if she was allied to Russia and Germany. On the other hand our alliance with Japan reduces our influence with China as we have not opposed Japanese aggression in China.

In Japan the Military party wishes to renew the alliance but it is quite possible that the renewal would be quite as popular with the Democrats.

It is thoroughly appreciated that in any renewal of the Alliance clauses must be inserted to make it clear that Great Britain would in no case side with Japan in a war between that country and the United States.

It has been suggested that the present time is unpropitious for renewing so binding an agreement as the unsettled condition of Japan makes the trend of their home and foreign policies doubtful.

Japan is certainly passing through a most critical time. Unless she is successful commercially it is unlikely that she become powerful enough to obtain a predominant position in the Pacific; we should strive all we can therefore to advance our commerce there.

### TERMS OF THE ALLIANCE

Assuming that the alliance is to be renewed, the question of the new terms is of great interest to Australia. The future naval policy must depend largely on those terms. I hope to send another report on this question.

The following remarks are my own, they carry no official weight, but I send them in the hope that I may receive in reply some expression of opinion which will tell me on what points I should obtain for your further information, or will guide me in any discussion which may take place.

The measure of Japan's desire for renewal would indicate the strength of the terms we may hope to arrange, but this will be difficult to gauge accurately.

If we can obtain the friendship of China we shall prevent Japan obtaining control of the immense potential wealth of that country or from organising the manhood and resources of China for the purpose of military aggression. We should therefore insist on the 'Open Door' and equality of opportunity in China.

It follows that the terms include conditions for Loans either to the Chinese government or for Public or Private works, industrial enterprises &c.

Japan should give up Shantung, possibly we might make some similar concession.

It would seem that we need not interfere with any Japanese move towards Siberia but we should object to any acquisition by her of territory in China or to the south. No such acquisition should be made without Great Britain's approval. In the event of the withdrawal of the United States from the Philippines Japan should not interfere there without the approval of Great Britain.

Some form of 'Gentleman's agreement' might be entered into for commercial intercourse between Japan and Australia.

Possibly some form of limitation of armaments could be arranged by insisting that Naval forces should be defensive and not aggressive type. I.E. limit the forces to light cruisers and smaller vessels. It is probably impracticable to watch a country so closely that an increase in numbers of small craft can be detected but battleships cannot be built in secret. Such a policy as this should ease the situation with America and might make some triple agreement possible.

We want to prevent Japan from acquiring a predominant influence in the Pacific. This might be achieved by:-

1. Preventing the control of China by the Japanese.
2. Not allowing Japan to acquire any possessions to the southward.
3. Excelling the Japanese in commerce.
4. Limitation of armaments in the Pacific.

## 12. *Letter to Major E. L. Piesse: Admiralty affairs*

25 July 1920

Thanks very much for your letter and paper on the Anglo Japanese Alliance both of which I was very glad to get.

I have not seen your report on your return from Japan. Is it possible for me to get it? I sent on 28th a report to the N. Board on the same subject. I have also sent Int. reports on Pacific affairs on May 28th and June 17th. Perhaps you have seen them. If not I should think you could get them from the N. Secretary.

I have now a room at the Admiralty and am attached to the plans division with freedom to tap any divisions I want to, a very satisfactory position and I find everyone very willing to help. I am able to bring forward the Pacific question and it is receiving careful consideration but

things are so unsettled in the world that it cannot progress very rapidly. Many people here have an idea that Australia need fear no serious attack. I think I am gradually dispelling that view.

The Admiralty are now entirely in favour of Dominion navies and realise the very valuable help that Australia can give. I shall always be very glad to help you in any way I can and you could, I suppose, get me by a cable through the High Commission altho' through the Naval Board would be the correct procedure. We can tap any official sources of information and many others here.

With regard to the Anglo Jap Alliance the position briefly is that we cannot well give it up unless we can have a definite agreement with America. This may come when party politics are less to the fore. The man who does Jap. Int. here is away on leave so I cannot get the best information to reply to your questions but the following may be of use.

*Yap.*<sup>1</sup>

The U.S.A. declared their intention of appealing to the Peace Conference against Japan having the mandate, but as far as is known the appeal has not been decided.

*Caroline and Marshalls.*

The existence of fortifications has recently been denied by Japanese statesmen and it is considered unlikely that any exist *at present*. We have no definite information.

The circulation of the Admiralty Monthly Intelligence report is most strictly limited. I think you must have seen at Singapore a copy supplied to the Naval Int. officer there & lent by him to the Military authorities. Between ourselves I don't think the Admiralty would issue it to a political office, it is intended purely for naval work. It would be more correct if you got some Foreign or Colonial Office report altho' neither of them has a very good Int. service. That of the Admiralty is the best here. Altho' far from perfect it is certainly good. Could you not arrange to be allowed to see the Navy Office copy at the Navy Office?

The report often contains secret naval information which should not go further afield. You will appreciate the necessity for secrecy.

I see in the papers there is to be a meeting of Premiers in British Colombia to discuss the Anglo Jap Alliance. Will you be there? I don't

<sup>1</sup>Yap, the westernmost of the Caroline Islands was administered by Germany before World War I and hosted a wireless telegraph and cable station. Japanese marines occupied the island in October 1914 and it remained under Japanese control until the end of World War II.

suppose I shall be sent altho' it might be useful if I were, particularly to discuss matters which will come up at the Imperial conference next spring.

\* \* \*

P.S. Have you ever considered the seizure, when the British Navy is occupied elsewhere & conditions are favourable, by Japan of the whole of New Guinea? It offers chances of success & would be very difficult to counter.

13. *Report to the Naval Secretary: value of submarines for Australia*

18 November 1920

### THE VALUE OF SUBMARINES FOR AUSTRALIA

The immense size to which capital ships have grown, due to the great speed which they are given, together with the protection which is necessary both above water against gunfire, and below water against torpedoes and mines, has increased their cost so much that only the richest nations can afford them.

Some change in policy may be decided upon with regard to capital ships, but a very careful examination of all the factors will be made before a decision is arrived at.

I do not propose to enlarge on this interesting subject, as it is evident that the cost of the 'capital' ship is prohibitive for Australia at present.

Australia's problem is to be able to defend herself until assistance can come from elsewhere. It is the problem of the weaker power. Her naval forces should be capable of assisting in an offensive phase but for the next few years must be designed to act primarily on the defensive.

Frederick the Great, in describing a defensive war, said: 'Those generals who have had but little experience attempt to protect every point, while those who are better acquainted with their profession, having only the capital object in view, guard against a decisive blow and acquiesce in smaller misfortunes to avoid a greater'.

This, it seems to me, indicates the correct strategical attitude for Australia. The important points must be well protected even if those which are less important are left exposed. As the Commonwealth grows in power the area protected will be increased.

Instead of attempting some great scheme which will give ample protection in ten or twenty years time the plans should, I suggest, aim at

giving good protection to the vital parts at once, and then develop on natural lines, to increase this protection. In this way new discoveries and new weapons will take their place naturally in the scheme, as they become available. A great scrapping of out-classed types will be avoided.

Admiral Daveluy, in examining the future of the battleship arrives at two conclusions:—

- (1) 'Surface fighting ships are indispensable to those maritime powers which intend to dispute the Empire of the Sea with their eventual adversaries.
- (2) On the other hand, nations which are obliged to adopt the defensive at sea in consequence of their lack of means have every interest to devote the whole of their resources to the construction of submarines; they can gain no advantage from their surface vessels.'

The second of these is, perhaps, an extreme opinion. Surface craft have many uses. It would, moreover, be most difficult to solve the problems of personnel in a Navy composed solely of submarines. Aircraft also have important uses.

As the chief weapon of the weaker power the submarine seems to have, at present, made good its position. This opinion seems to be generally accepted.

The war led to rapid development in Naval weapons and it is not easy to assimilate, as yet, the many lessons which are to be learned. It is still more difficult to look ahead, but that is what we have to do.

The submarine did not do all that its more ardent advocates claimed that it could perform, yet it had a very marked effect on naval operations. Surface craft could not keep the sea in submarine infested waters without taking precautions which limited their operations.

Even battle fleets had to spend much time in harbour instead of watching off the coasts of the enemy. This was by no means entirely due to submarine dangers, but was largely so.

The German 'High Seas' Fleet could not attack our Grand Fleet unless the latter was reduced to equality or inferiority. The Germans could wait for a day when their fleet, at its full strength, could attack our reduced fleet. Submarines and mines failed to reduce our Grand Fleet but immense care was necessary to keep it at all times in superior strength. The Germans did press their submarine attacks in the early days when our Fleet had no secure anchorage. Our Fleet could not afford to take risks and so the inferior German Fleet, together with their submarines held our most powerful and costly weapon in a passive state. Our fleet could not be used for offensive operations or to gain the initiative.

Similarly, in the Adriatic the French, and later, the Italian Battle Fleets, were neutralised. It is claimed that the operations of a single submarine made it impossible for us to bring our Dardanelles operations to a successful issue. The appearance of a single Bolshevik submarine in the Baltic at once had a cramping effect on our blockade operations there.

The future position in the Pacific may be likened to that in the North Sea. The Japanese could not afford to expose their capital ships to danger from submarines if they knew that sooner or later they would have to meet a British Battle Fleet. They would have to preserve their battle-ships intact to meet the coming danger.

There is, as yet, no effective counter to the submarine, nor is one in sight. Hydrophones and depth charges have by no means solved the problem. The hydrophone is not truly efficient, and one German submarine claimed that some 1,500 depth charges had been aimed at it and only three times was some slight internal damage done.

The effectiveness of submarines has been shown to be immensely dependent on the personality of the commanding officers, but of their value as deterrents there is no doubt.

To come to a decision on the question of the value of submarines for defensive operations it is necessary to review in detail the various forms which an enemy offensive might take and then to consider the defensive use of submarines to counter such operations.

The submarine can be given a greater sea endurance than any type of small surface craft and is far better able to act unsupported, relying on its own qualities for protection.

It is able to perform patrol duties efficiently, to attack powerful surface craft and to act as a commerce protector against both surface craft and submarines.

In the neighbourhood of the British Isles 4,000 small craft were at one time in commission in order to hunt for German submarines, of which an average of 18 were operating at sea; and this was in waters which were restricted in area compared with Australian waters. It would be impossible to organise from Australian resources submarine hunters in anything like sufficient numbers. Until some more satisfactory anti-submarine weapon is designed it seems that submarines, acting in conjunction with Air Patrols, would give Australia the best value for her money in this matter.

The small surface craft could not be used for other defensive purposes whilst the s.m. would have its value against all forms of attack.

Of small craft for anti-s.m. work the American 'Eagle' type of motor launch (120') is well spoken of, but it is doubtful if it is suitable for open sea work off the coasts of Australia. The provision of numbers would be

costly, and these boats would have little value against other forms of attack.

All surface anti-submarine work should not be given up – if submarines are working off a terminal port and they know that defensive submarines are on diving patrol in the vicinity they will do their commerce-destroying while submerged, and will be chary of coming to the surface. It is then that any makeshift surface anti-submarine vessel can come into action whether as escort vessel with the convoy or as a general patrol unit near harbour. When a submarine is submerged she can be dealt with by an Eagle boat – a yacht – or any comparatively fast vessel carrying depth charges. When a submarine fights on the surface she must be met by good guns (which imply a fairly big ship to carry them) or by other submarines.

Half the effect caused by anti-submarine submarines lies in their making the enemy keep submerged. A submarine's 'danger radius' is reduced by half when she is made to submerge, and she can also be dealt with by a vessel near which carries depth charges.

In Australian waters our own submarines would not be hunted by numerous enemy small craft.

The attached analysis of types of attack which might be expected by Australia and the value of s.m.'s for countering such attacks seems to show that s.m.'s., in conjunction with an efficient aviation service, will give Australia the maximum of protection for money expended.

I propose to make a similar analysis of the utility of cruisers and types of aircraft.

\* \* \*

#### 14. *Letter to J. G. Latham: a central Council and staff*

4 January 1921

Many thanks for your letter and congratulations. My wife & I were both pleased to get the C.B.E. & went to Buckingham Palace to have it put on.

We are very happy over here and are all very fit. I am quite well again and could do quite hard work if there was any to do. My job here is very interesting and I am able to push Pacific affairs to the front a bit. They are now being carefully worked out by anti-Jellicoeites so we can get two points of view.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>During his Dominion tour Jellicoe had received some Admiralty criticism for exceeding his brief: debating Pacific questions before the Board had had time to consider them properly.

I am able to get the latest opinions on most subjects but I really have not a great deal of work to do. Consequently I turn to work which is not so directly mine. I am at present busy with a scheme for a Central council and Central staff to co-ordinate all the forces of England and the Dominions. By centralising not only could proper Dominion representation be arranged but real co-operation should be possible. Parts of the present staffs from the Admiralty, War Office and Air Ministry would be put into one building to work together. The intelligence departments of all these would be amalgamated making a distinct saving. The C.I.D. & its staff would be done away with, the Prime Minister getting his intelligence from the Central Staff. At the head of the Central Staff would be the 1st Sea Lord, Chief of General Staff & Air Marshall.

I am working out the scheme with a Colonel Dundas from the War Office and it is shaping well. When finished I shall send you a copy. I shall also send copies to Admiral Grant & General White. The Admiralty knows nothing of the scheme & would oppose. The W.O. would agree. I have written a couple of articles (anonymous) for the *Naval Review* to get the idea into the Navy.<sup>1</sup> What I want is to get the Australian Minister who comes to the conference to take it up. Perhaps you could help in that when I send you the scheme?

I was very sorry to hear that Mackenzie<sup>2</sup> had gone, it is so foolish to let a good man go, there are none too many of them.

I have shed no tears at your news about Steward.<sup>3</sup>

### 15. Letter to E. L. Piesse: the Washington conferences

Craven House  
Northumberland Ave, W.C. 1  
14 September 1921

'I was very glad to see Senator Pearce's appointment to Washington, and that you were to accompany him, I don't think Australia could be better represented

I fear you will not find much first hand knowledge about Pacific affairs among the English delegates, but I suppose they have made some study of the problems.

<sup>1</sup>'United We Stand', *Naval Review*, Vol. IX, 1921, p. 1; 'Imperial Defence', *Naval Review*, Vol. IX, 1921, p. 173.

<sup>2</sup>Cdr Kenneth Ord Mackenzie, RAN (1874–1937), Intelligence Branch and Assistant Director Naval Ordnance, Navy Office 1918–20.

<sup>3</sup>Steward died of heart disease on 11 May 1920.

I am wondering if I can be of any help to you on this side, if so please let me know. You could always send confidential matter through the Admiralty staff; I have no doubt that Rayment, to whom I have given a letter of introduction to you, would arrange this, or for secret telegrams.

I am sending you a couple of articles I have written for the *Naval Review* which might be of some use, as they contain an argument for the 'exclusion of Asiatics' policy which appeals to both English and Americans.<sup>1</sup> I also enclose 'Notes on the Racial aspect of the Pacific problem' which I sent recently to the Director of Naval Intelligence. Also some notes which I have made from time to time on the Conference questions, these notes are of course of no importance but they may interest you.

Personally I am all for siding with America, if Japan can come in also so much the better. Japan seems to hold all the best cards.

If, later, Senator Pearce wants any assistance on Naval questions I should be available to come over if he cabled the High Commissioner. I imagine no difficulty would be put in the way of my coming.

You will certainly have a very interesting and instructive time and I am glad the work you have put into these questions is to be used.

### 16. *Letter to J. G. Latham: the capital ship*

4 March 1923

Very many thanks for sending me your election address; it is a fine record you set out, I wish I knew if you had got in? Men like you are badly wanted in politics.

I should think this new Government, with Bruce<sup>2</sup> as Prime Minister, should do much good if they can hold their own.

\* \* \*

I see Bruce has already, very pluckily it seems to me, touched on the Empire questions. There is not the faintest understanding of Australia's position here. What little conception there was of Japan as a danger centre in the Pacific has faded out and Japan is looked on as an honest ally who did her part truly & well in the war. I have lost touch with Japanese affairs

<sup>1</sup>'Outlines of History – 1. Racial Migrations', *Naval Review*, Vol. IX, 1921, p. 503; 'Outlines of History – 2. Emigration', *Naval Review*, Vol. X, 1922, p. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Stanley Melbourne Bruce (later 1st Viscount Bruce of Melbourne) (1883–1967), Australian Prime Minister 1923–29.

lately but I take it that we are not inclined to press for a reduction of the American fleet in order that it may be strong enough to overcome Japan.

Much has been said & written on the subject of capital ships but the fact is that many experiments must be made before the fighting ship of the future can be designed. I foresee a ship which will be able to rise almost out of the water on step-ladderlike planes when she wants to go fast & to avoid torpedoes & mines, and almost to submerge when she wants to use her guns, still our best weapon. Until something of that sort can be built the big & very costly battleship remains the most powerful sea weapon. Submarines are almost worthless against her except in close waters & for local defence. Submarines, as you know, achieved scarcely any military results against modern war ships in the war. A strong argument for the big battleship (i.e. whilst she can hold her own, & against inventing something less costly), is, to my mind, that America & ourselves are the only nations that can afford them.

It is fairly easy to safeguard a ship against bombs from the air, and torpedoes from aeroplanes are no great danger. Like submarines they are an extension of local defence, that is to say very similar to an increase in gun range from forts. On the whole modern inventions seem to increase the powers of defence of a country from sea raids more than they strengthen the attack, except for the use of gas which may be terrible against the unprotected inhabitants of towns.

A couple of years ago I was studying the question of an Empire staff rather closely & got into touch with parliamentary & War Office men who were interested in it. There are a few in Parliament & at the W.O. who believe in it but the Admiralty is dead against it. I am sending you a couple of copies of an article I wrote for the 'Naval Review' on the subject (perhaps I sent you one before?), the editor had it reprinted in pamphlet form & gave me copies.<sup>1</sup> If Bruce raises the Empire questions this will surely form one of them.

<sup>1</sup> 'A Defence Organisation for the Community of British Nations', *Naval Review*, Vol. X, 1922, p. 53.

17. *Letter to H. C. Bywater: operations against von Spee in 1914*

Seven Acres  
Coltishall, Norfolk  
4 September 1934

Your letter, in the *Daily Telegraph* of today, has opened the inner history of the operations against the German Squadron in the Pacific in 1914. I see no reason why such facts as are known to me should not be published.

I had organised, and was in 1914, in charge of, the Royal Australian Naval Intelligence Service. From my diary I am able to put in order some of the events connected with von Spee's Squadron. Thus. Mon July 27th 'War alarms'. July 28th 'Sent to Naval Board suggested precautionary steps'. July 30th 'Conference with Balsillie<sup>1</sup> re W.T. censorship'.

That night, July 30th, we set all Australian W.T. stations to listen for signals from the German Squadron. I asked our China and New Zealand Intelligence officers if they knew anything of these ships. We found that the squadron had not been placed for about six weeks. That night several signals from *Scharnhorst*<sup>2</sup> were heard. As we had no directional apparatus I could only plot these by strength of signal at different stations. The result placed the squadron some 300' N.E. of Papua. A report from Messrs Lever's ship (then near the Solomon Islands) confirmed this position, but plottings on subsequent nights varied greatly.

From my diary. July 31st 'Slept at Navy office from now on. Very busy night, no sleep' (cables from England were usually received at night, our time being ten hours ahead of Greenwich. July 31st 'Precautionary measures taken').

Aug 4th '3P.M. With Admiral Creswell & Mr Macandie to Minister, very important business re movements of *Australia*. (This was to get approval for the despatch of the R.A.N., if war was declared, to attack Rabaul and, if they could be found, the German Pacific Squadron.)

Aug 5th Received telegram from the Admiralty 'War Declared'. 2-5 Went with Admiral Creswell to see Minister and Cabinet for permission to act on war telegram. Put many German ships in the bag through Detention Service'. In the car, on the way to the Cabinet, I drafted the telegram to be sent to the Home Government placing the R.A.N. directly under Admiralty control.

<sup>1</sup>John Graham Balsillie (1885-1924), engineer for radiotelegraphy, Australian Postmaster-General's Department 1911-15.

<sup>2</sup>SMS *Scharnhorst*: armoured cruiser, 1907; 12,985 tons; 8×8.2in, 6×5.9in, 18×3.45in, 4×tt; 23.5 knots.

In preparing the 'War Book' I had noted that German merchant vessels were believed to have a secret code issued to them and that these codes were to be searched for. Therefore I sent to our District Naval Officers, who were in charge of the detention service, orders to search for the codes when they seized German Merchant vessels.

Captain Richardson,<sup>1</sup> at Melbourne, seized two of these codes, one of them in dramatic fashion. He lay in the Captain's bunk and simulated sleep, his revolver at his side. After some hours the cabin door was stealthily opened and two men entered. They proceeded to force open a raised foot rest under the desk. Then Captain Richardson flashed on the light, with 'Hands up' enforced by his threatening revolver. His guard came to the door, the German Captain and his carpenter were taken prisoners, and the code books were duly found.

I cabled the Admiralty that we had these books and I was surprised to hear from them that no others had been seized elsewhere. Thus all messages in this code had to be sent to us to be decoded until we could get the books copied and distributed. I added Dr Wheatley<sup>2</sup> to my intelligence staff as he knew German well and put him in charge of the decoding.

Our Squadron was at Rabaul on Aug 8th but found no German ships there. Instead of allowing the squadron to take the offensive against the Germans the Admiralty recalled our ships and sent them to the futile seizure of Samoa, an island which we hoped might be used as bait for the Germans if it remained in their possession. This operation, for which no reason has, as far as I know, ever been put forward, occupied six precious weeks. I could use them only to prepare another expedition to Rabaul, with a troopship, colliers etc., in order to seize that port and use it as a base for our operations against von Spee, who was still in the area, void from an intelligence point of view, to the north. We knew the German position, very vaguely, because they continued to make W.T. signals to Yap. Unfortunately a ship from the China Squadron was sent to destroy this station, and we lost our only contact with von Spee.

On Sep 12th our second expedition occupied Rabaul, after a little fighting near the W.T. station there, but it was then too late.

On Sept 14th I received a coded German signal which had been intercepted in mid Pacific. It was in the code we possessed but had been transposed. Dr Wheatley reported that he could not decode it. I discussed the problem with a chaplain who was something of a code expert, and,

<sup>1</sup>Capt. John Tracy Richardson, RAN (1860–1941), District Naval Officer Melbourne 1911–19.

<sup>2</sup>Frederick William Wheatley (1871–1956), Senior Naval Instructor RANC 1914–19; Headmaster RANC 1919–31.

with some suggestions from him, set Dr Wheatley once more to the attack. After much careful labour he succeeded in decoding the signal. It appeared to me to be most important as it gave Easter Island as a rendezvous for all German cruisers in the north Pacific. I cabled this to the Admiralty at once; it seemed to show that the Germans were off to the Gulf of Panama or S. America. Reports of coal ordered at San Francisco confirmed this.

I went to Sydney and arranged that the fastest collier we could find should leave for Fiji. The *Australia* was ordered to Fiji as the nearest port, on our station, to Easter Island and I confidently expected that the Admiralty would order her to pursue the Germans. She could have joined Admiral Cradock, or demolished the Germans single handed, long before the battle of Coronel. But the Admiralty, for reasons unknown to me, would have none of it; they refused to let the *Australia* proceed.

That ended our R.A.N. operations against the squadron of von Spee.

We in Australia were not able to decode German signals made in their naval code, the code we possessed was a less secret one for communicating between merchant vessels and men of war. Our good fortune in obtaining these codes was actually due to Admiralty foresight as they had informed us that such codes were probably in existence.

My memory does not permit me to corroborate that we had any message stating that the German squadron was going to call at the Falkland Islands, but I was a busy man at that time, the squadron had passed out of our zone, and I may have forgotten that such a signal passed through my hands.

## List of Documents

### *Collections used*

SPC, Thring Papers: Compiled by his son, Professor Meredith Thring.

Copy and additional material held by the Naval Historical Section, Sea Power Centre – Australia, Canberra.

NLA, MS 6409: The papers of Sir John Latham, National Library of Australia, Canberra

NLA, MS 882: The papers of E. L. Piesse, National Library of Australia, Canberra

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4. Thring to Creswell 4 February 1916 NAA, MP1049/1/0, 16/047
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7. Thring to Latham 12 November 1918 NLA, MS 6409, 1009/1/548
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16. Thring to Latham 4 March 1923 NLA, MS 6409, 1009/1/1038
17. Thring to Bywater 4 September 1934 SPC, Thring Papers



## XI

# THE RELIEF OF ADMIRAL NORTH FROM GIBRALTAR IN 1940

*Edited by*  
*Robin Brodhurst and Michael Simpson*

Vice-Admiral Sir Dudley North (1881–1961) was appointed Flag Officer Commanding North Atlantic Station, based on Gibraltar, on 1 November 1939, and had his appointment extended in May 1940, being promoted to full Admiral.<sup>1</sup> On 15 October 1940 (though the changeover was delayed until 14 December), the Admiralty relieved him early, alleging that he had permitted the free passage of a French squadron through the Strait of Gibraltar on 11 September 1940; as a consequence the Board had lost confidence in him, accusing him of not performing his duty and of failing to show a sense of initiative. He retired on 25 December 1941.<sup>2</sup> North rejected the reasons advanced by the Admiralty for his early relief and requested a Court Martial or a Court of Enquiry on several occasions; he spent the rest of his life trying to clear his name, being supported by most of the living Admirals of the Fleet and several other senior officers.<sup>3</sup> Through his efforts and theirs he achieved partial absolution from the Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan, in 1957.<sup>4</sup> After leaving Gibraltar and later the Royal Navy, North served humbly in the Home Guard before

<sup>1</sup>Adm Sir Dudley North (1881–1961): ent RN 1896; *New Zealand* 1914–16, battles of Heligoland Bight, Dogger Bank, Jutland; Capt. *Caledon* 1922; DOD 1930; RA 1932; VA, R Yachts 1936–39; FOCNA 1 Nov. 1939–14 Dec. 1940; Adm 8 May 1940; ret 25 Dec. 1941; Home Guard; RA, ret, FO Yarmouth 1943; command of R Yachts 1946–47; ret 1947.

<sup>2</sup>He would normally serve two to three years.

<sup>3</sup>AoF Lords Chatfield, Cork, Cunningham, Sir John Cunningham, Sir Algernon Willis. Notable absentees were AoF Lord Tovey (reason unknown); AoF Lord Fraser, who had been 3SL & Controller and a member of Bd of Ady in 1940. He was 1SL 1949–51 and his successors, AoF Sir R. McGrigor and Lord Mountbatten, found it too delicate to handle when the RN was fighting to maintain its offensive capacity. Other senior officers to offer support included AoF Sir J. Somerville, VA Sir G. Blake, Adm Sir B. Ramsay, RA H.G. Thursfield (naval correspondent, *The Times*), and Capt S. W. Roskill (the official naval historian of 2WW). There were several internal Ady inquiries, which upheld the Board's decision. North had put in a request for a hearing in Nov. 1943, shortly after his friend Andrew Cunningham had become First Sea Lord. Cunningham knew nothing about it until after the war; he suspected that Alexander had kept it from him.

<sup>4</sup>Harold Macmillan (1894–1988): Con MP, Stockton; Res Minr, Algiers 1942–43 & Naples 1944–45; PM 1957–63; Earl of Stockton 1984.

being recalled in 1943, as a retired officer, as Flag Officer Yarmouth. In 1946 King George VI re-appointed him Admiral of the Royal Yachts, a post he had held between 1936 and 1939.

The immediate cause of North's early relief was the unmolested passage of three French cruisers and three large destroyers from Toulon to Dakar via the Strait of Gibraltar on 11 September 1940. North had incurred already the wrath of the Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, the First Lord (A. V. Alexander) and the First Sea Lord (Admiral of the Fleet Sir Dudley Pound) for his critical views – expressed after the event – on the attack on the French fleet at Mers-el-Kébir on 3 July 1940 by Force H, commanded by his great friend Vice-Admiral Sir James Somerville and also based on Gibraltar [1, 2].<sup>1</sup> He was reprimanded by the Board of Admiralty for protesting officially about a decision already taken but Pound resisted calls for his replacement from Churchill and Alexander, feeling that there were insufficient grounds for his relief and that he deserved a second chance [3, 8, 9]. Though he did not realise it, North therefore remained in post throughout the summer of 1940 pending another error of judgement. When that was deemed to have occurred with the free passage of the French squadron, North was informed that he would be relieved. Somerville, who had carried out the attack on the French fleet with great distaste, protested about his friend's treatment and insisted that he was at least equally culpable. Somerville was, however, exonerated and the blame continued to fall on North [43, 45–6].<sup>2</sup>

A series of signals in the early days of July 1940 informed North that French ships should not be permitted to enter an enemy-controlled port (this was meant to include Dakar, then in Vichy hands and suspected of being under German influence) but the accumulated and still extant instructions he had received, coupled with his local intelligence, made the situation somewhat ambiguous [4–7]. On 9 September, North was informed by the Consul General at Tangier that the French were likely to send a squadron from the Mediterranean into the Atlantic; this information was echoed by a signal from the Naval Attaché at Madrid on 10 September; it was despatched at 1809 but North may not have seen it

<sup>1</sup>Winston S. Churchill (1874–1965): FL Sept. 1939–May 1940; PM & Minister of Defence May 1940–May 1945. A. V. Alexander (later Earl Alexander of Hillsborough, 1885–1965): FL 1929–31, May 1940–Dec. 1945; Minister of Defence 1946. AoF Sir A. Dudley P. R. Pound (1877–1943): VA 1930; 2SL 1932; Adm 1935; C-in-C Med 1936–39; FSL June 1939–Oct. 1943. AoF Sir James Somerville (1882–1949): VA 1937; C-in-C, E Indies 1938; ret, ill health 1939; FOC, Force H 27 June 1940; Adm & C-in-C, E Fleet 12 Feb. 1942; restored to Active List 1944; Head, BAD, Washington 1944; AoF 1945; ret 1946.

<sup>2</sup>An inquiry was sparked by Somerville's halting of the pursuit of the Italian fleet while escorting a convoy to Malta, 27 November 1940; it cleared him completely; the members were AoF Lord Cork and VA Sir George D'Oyly-Lyon.

before midnight [10, 11].<sup>1</sup> North, assuming that the Admiralty had received and considered the Naval Attaché's message, relayed the information to HM ships on patrol in the Strait, which were under his command, but, following his interpretation of recent instructions and current intelligence, ordered them only to report news of the French ships, not to take action to stop them [12–15]. North informed the Admiralty of what he had done and also reported that he had arranged for aerial reconnaissance of the squadron [16, 17]. Three days of brisk signal traffic then ensued, as the Admiralty endeavoured to corral the French ships, to discover the source of the prior information, and the ultimate destination of the force. Somerville was ordered by the Admiralty to patrol south of Casablanca in *Renown*, supported by such destroyers as were available, and assisted by aerial reconnaissance [18–29].<sup>2</sup> The Admiralty was worried about possible interference with a squadron assembled for operation 'Menace', a plan to seize Dakar for the Gaullist cause. The Vichy French on shore and in harbour defeated this enterprise with ease (23 September 1940); even if the squadron from Toulon had been destined for Dakar (it was headed for Libreville, with the intention of preventing a Gaullist take-over there), it did not constitute a strong enough reinforcement to affect the result at Dakar.<sup>3</sup>

Two weeks later, after operation 'Menace' and other urgent concerns, the Admiralty requested further information of North and ordered him to make a report on his lack of action [30–34]. At the Admiralty, a series of notes passed between the Secretary and the First Sea Lord, the former expressing serious doubts about North's early supersession, the latter somewhat belligerently arguing for it [35–40].<sup>4</sup> This debate over North's future was ended by an Admiralty letter of 15 October which required his early relief [40]. North appealed and his desire to take issue with the letter was granted [41, 42]. His friend Somerville, on his own responsibility, wrote to the Admiralty, supporting North fully and accepting blame for failing to act [43, 45]. The Admiralty absolved Somerville on the grounds that he received information too late to act and in any case readied *Renown* for sea. The Board may have taken into account also the fact that

<sup>1</sup>CG, Tangier: A. D. F. (later Sir Alvary) Gascoigne (b. 1893): CG Tangier Aug. 1939; Minister, Hungary 1945; Ambassador, Japan 1946; Ambassador, Moscow 1951; ret 1953. NA, Madrid: Capt Alan Hillgarth: Acting Capt & Assistant NA, Madrid Aug. 1939; NA Feb. 1940–Oct. 1943; COIS, E Fleet 1943–44.

<sup>2</sup>*Renown*: battlecruiser, 1916; modernised 1936–39; 32,000t, 6×15in, 20×4.5in, 8tt, 29k. Destroyers: mainly A-I classes: c.1,370t, 4×4.7in, 8tt, 35k. Force H lost most of its ships after Mers-el-Kébir and for Dakar operation.

<sup>3</sup>See S. W. Roskill, *The War at Sea* (London, 1954), I, pp. 309–14, and his *Churchill and the Admirals* (London, 1977), pp. 158–66, for fuller accounts. Roskill is essentially pro-North; A. J. Marder, *Operation Menace* (London, 1976), is pro-Pound.

<sup>4</sup>Sir R. H. Archibald Carter (1887–1958): India Office; Secretary, Ady 1936–40.

Somerville *had* carried out the highly unpalatable orders to fire on the French fleet at Mers-el-Kébir [44].

Early in December, North asked that Admiral of the Fleet Lord Cork and Vice Admiral D'Oyly-Lyon, who were in Gibraltar to enquire into Somerville's decision not to pursue the Italian fleet off Cape Spartivento on 27 November, should remain and hear his appeal against his premature relief [50].<sup>1</sup> This was refused, the Admiralty confirming its earlier decision to replace North [48, 51]. On 8 December, shortly before he left the Rock, North made a last attempt to present his case to the Board and penned an exhaustive letter [52]. This led to an (internal) riposte from Pound, who upheld his original decision to bring North home [53]. The Admiralty did, however, take the Secretary's advice and clarified the position of Force H, mentioning its relationship to the Flag Officer Commanding North Atlantic – something that was not done in the initial orders [1, 39, 54].

North was tireless in his endeavours to clear his name both during and after the war and several senior officers supported his case for some sort of hearing. These efforts resulted in a letter from most of the surviving Admirals of the Fleet in 1955, and ultimately in a deputation by them to the then Prime Minister, Harold Macmillan, in 1957, together with a pertinent letter from Lord Chatfield, a former First Sea Lord, who was indisposed [56, 57]. Official statements were made in both Houses, followed by speeches by members in favour of North. A vigorous opposition to any review was mounted by Earl Alexander of Hillsborough (who as A. V. Alexander had been First Lord in 1940 and thus party to the Board's decision against North) [55]. The Prime Minister, having read all the evidence, issued a final declaration in 1957, clearing North's name but not as fully or as unequivocally as North and his family would have liked [58].

Can one come to a definitive conclusion in the North case? It is impossible to furnish *all* the evidence here. On the basis of what has been reproduced, however, and other evidence in the public domain, certain conclusions can be advanced. The *dramatis personae* at the head of government and at the Admiralty were crucial to the case. The former First Lord, Winston Churchill, was by then the Prime Minister. A forceful figure who believed strongly in his own judgement (which was on occasion faulty, particularly in regard to individuals), he interfered constantly in ministries. At the Admiralty he had placed a First Lord, A. V. Alexander, who had been there between 1929 and 1931 but who

<sup>1</sup> AoF Earl of Cork & Orerry (1873–1967): Adm 1932; C-in-C, Home F 1933–34; C-in-C Portsmouth 1935–37; AoF 1938; FO, Narvik 1940. Adm Sir George D'Oyly-Lyon: VA & C-in-C Africa 1938–41; C-in-C Nore 1941–43; Adm 1942; ret 1943.

was subject to intimidation by the overbearing Churchill. The Secretary, Sir Archibald Carter, imported from the India Office, was a hesitant figure and did not stamp his authority on the Admiralty; unluckily, he was in post between 1936 and the end of November 1940. The First Sea Lord, Admiral of the Fleet Sir Dudley Pound, an accomplished staff officer and widely experienced in flag commands, was a strong character who played Churchill cannily, though he shared the Prime Minister's failing for hasty and sometimes unreliable judgements of individuals. Pound shared also with the Prime Minister a desire to lead the Royal Navy in the Second World War in a more vigorously offensive manner than had been evident to either of them in the First World War; this demanded incidentally a strong sense of initiative among the corps of Flag Officers. There were several instances in the war where he or the Prime Minister, or both, moved swiftly to judge flag officers before all the facts were to hand, or to replace them prematurely, even if they had selected them.<sup>1</sup>

Aside from personalities, it is important to note that the Prime Minister, his War Cabinet and the Admiralty had perforce to see the global picture and take major strategic decisions. These had to be made in the light of a total war and one in which Britain was on the ropes. This situation made for ruthlessness, characterised particularly by Churchill and Pound, and the frenetic pace of change in the war's course in the spring and summer of 1940 meant that these decisions had to be made quickly without proper thought or full information and in an agitated state of mind. This atmosphere of dire crisis, uncompromising decisiveness, and prompt action was particularly evident in the treatment of Britain's late ally, France. After the French sued for an armistice on 17 June, the French government, which had fled from Paris to Bordeaux, came to rest at Vichy, where it was headed by a hero of the First World War, Marshal Pétain, one of whose major *confrères* was the head of the French Navy, the highly political Admiral Darlan.<sup>2</sup> Neither Britain nor Vichy, nor the Germans or the Italians, or the neutrals, was quite sure how the new French government and its policies were going to turn out. For Britain, the situation was still fluid. Though a Free French movement under the junior General de Gaulle had received official British recognition, Churchill still hoped that an

<sup>1</sup>There were the cases of Somerville (Cape Spartivento, 1940), Wake-Walker (breaking off pursuit of *Bismarck*, 1941), Tovey (command of Home Fleet, 1942), Harwood (C-in-C, Levant, 1943), Daniel (VA (Q), British Pacific Fleet, 1944), and Fraser (Churchill proposing a strategic test before agreeing to him taking charge of the British Pacific Fleet, 1944).

<sup>2</sup>Marshal Henri Pétain (1856–1951): hero of Verdun 1916; PM Vichy France 1940–44; death sentence, commuted to life imprisonment 1945–51. Adm Jean-François Darlan (1881–1942): the father of the modern French Navy; CNS & Adm 1939–40; various high offices in Vichy govt 1940–42; murdered Algiers, Dec. 1942.

accommodation could be made with Vichy.<sup>1</sup> The Vichy government was equally ambivalent, though its freedom of action was severely circumscribed by enemy occupation of much of France and the hampering effect of the armistice terms. Admiral Darlan and other naval and government figures were, however, adamant that the French fleet – the second largest in Europe and for the most part modern – would remain neutral. The Italians and Germans made no obvious move for it but the British distrusted the guarantees given by Darlan and others, and the Axis honouring the disarmament terms. With their freedom at stake, they wished to make three major statements. They wanted to strike some positive offensive blow to inform Hitler and Mussolini that they would fight on – and all out.<sup>2</sup> They wished to demonstrate the same resilience and determination to neutral states – especially the USA. Finally, they were determined that the Germans and Italians would not capture intact important French ships – notably the up-to-date battleships *Richelieu* and *Jean Bart* and the modern battlecruisers *Dunkerque* and *Strasbourg* – by a *coup de main*, a tactic for which they were notorious.<sup>3</sup> Such seizures could materially affect the naval balance in the war, though the Axis powers would have faced major difficulties in manning and operating the ships. Churchill, Alexander and Pound made their position absolutely clear when they ordered the seizure of French vessels in British ports, the neutralisation of the Alexandria squadron, the immobilisation of the half-completed *Richelieu* and *Jean Bart*, and the destruction by force of the *Force de Raid* at Mers-el-Kébir. No British flag officer could have been left in doubt of the utter ruthlessness of the conduct of Churchill, Alexander and Pound towards their late allies. Surviving French ships were to be treated with equal peremptoriness, if not such a degree of brutality.

At Gibraltar, Admiral North was in a key strategic position with regard to the French. His former allies had at Toulon, Casablanca, Dakar, Mers-el-Kébir and other ports a force far greater than his own, which consisted mostly of old destroyers and auxiliaries for patrolling the Strait. When France signed an armistice, North was ordered to persuade Admiral

<sup>1</sup>Gen Charles de Gaulle (1890–1970): CO, 4 Armoured Div March 1940; Brig.-Gen. 1 June 1940; escaped to London; raised Free French flag 18 June 1940; recognized by UK 28 June 1940; ent Paris 26 Aug. 1944; head of government Oct. 1944; President 1944–46, 1958–69.

<sup>2</sup>Adolf Hitler (1889–1945): Nazi Chancellor, Germany 1933–45 ('Führer'); suicide 1945. Benito Mussolini (1883–1945): Fascist PM Italy 1922–43; dictator 1925 ('Il Duce'); dismissed July 1943 but seized by Germans Sept. 1943; executed by partisans April 1945.

<sup>3</sup>*Richelieu* (1940), *Jean Bart* (1949): French battleships, 35,000t+, 30k, 8×15in, 9×6in, 12×3.9in. *Dunkerque*, *Strasbourg*: French battlecruisers, 1937–38; 26,500t, 29.5k, 8×13in, 16×5.1in.

Gensoul, in command at Mers-el-Kébir, to rejoin the Royal Navy in the war against the Axis.<sup>1</sup> Gensoul refused, though he reiterated Darlan's promise that the ships would not fall under enemy control. The Admiralty, nevertheless, decided tougher measures were needed and collected together a powerful but scratch force under the one available flag officer, the retired Vice-Admiral Sir James Somerville, who had experience of the area, had had his flag up at sea, and was noted for his resourcefulness and energy. Somerville conducted a day's fruitless negotiations with Gensoul via Captain Cedric Holland on 3 July.<sup>2</sup> When these failed, Somerville was compelled by Admiralty pressure to open fire. More than 1,300 French sailors were killed, one old battleship was blown up, another was sunk, and *Dunkerque* was *hors de combat* – although, in a botched operation, *Strasbourg* escaped unharmed to Toulon, which was exactly where the Admiralty did not want her to go.<sup>3</sup> Somerville, who acted with great distaste, had protested about his drastic orders *before* the operation, having the full support of North, his Vice Admiral Air, 'Nuttie' Wells, all his captains, and the Assistant Chief of Naval Staff (Foreign), Vice Admiral Sir Geoffrey Blake, the C-in-C, Mediterranean, Acting Admiral Sir Andrew Cunningham (who had his own delicate *problème français*), and most other flag officers, as well as the Governor of Gibraltar and the Ambassador in Madrid, Sir Samuel Hoare.<sup>4</sup> By convention, flag officers were allowed to make one protest about Admiralty orders *before* they had to be carried out. This was done by Somerville and others – but North's protest was made *after* the event and drew a stern reprimand. Not having a Resident Minister (a major politician later found to be a most useful

<sup>1</sup>Adm Marcel-Bruno Gensoul (1880–1973): VA 1937; Préfet Maritime, Toulon; C-in-C, Atl Sqdn 1938; C-in-C, Atl F 1939; Adm July 1940; Inspector General, Maritime Forces; ret 1942.

<sup>2</sup>VA Cedric Holland: Capt 1932; NA, Paris Jan 1938–May 1940; *Ark Royal* June 1940–April 1941; *Cormorant* (Gibraltar HQ) May 1941; DSD 1942; RA 1942; RA (Q), Eastern F, 1943; VA & ret 1945.

<sup>3</sup>*Bretagne*: battleship, 1913; 22,838t, 21k, 10×13.4in, 14×5.5in. *Provence*, same class, was also sunk but raised and made Toulon. On this episode, see A. J. Marder, *From the Dardanelles to Oran* (London, 1974), R. Dannreuther, *Somerville's Force H* (London, 2005), and Simpson (ed.), *The Somerville Papers* (Navy Records Society, Aldershot, 1995), pp. 37–47, 86–113.

<sup>4</sup>VA L. V. Wells: VA 1939; VA (Air), Force H, June–Aug 1940; FOC Orkney & Shetland 1941; ret 1943; FOIC Aberdeen 1943–45. VA Sir Geoffrey Blake (1882–1968): VA 1935; Battlecruiser Squadron 1935–38; ret 1938 following serious illness; ACNS (F) 1940; FO Liaison with US Navy in European Waters 1941–45. AoF Viscount Cunningham of Hyndhope: (1883–1963): VA 1936; 2 i/c Med F 1937–38; DCNS 1938–39; C-in-C, Med F 1939–42; Adm 1941; Head, BAD 1942; NCAXF 1942–43; AoF 1943; FSL 1943–46. Governor Gibraltar: Lt Gen Sir Clive Liddell (1883–1956): Lt Gen & Adjutant Gen 1937; C-in-C Gibraltar July 1939; Gen Feb 1941. Sir Samuel Hoare (Viscount Templewood, 1880–1959): Con MP, Chelsea 1910–44; Foreign Secretary 1935; FL 1936; Home Secretary 1937; Lord Privy Seal 1939; Secretary of State for Air 1940; Ambassador to Spain 1940–44.

appointment in several places in the Mediterranean), the men on the spot tended to look at events through localised eyes or in purely naval terms.<sup>1</sup> They judged that, given time, they could persuade the French to demilitarise their ships, pointing out that the use of force threatened to tip Vichy into the enemy camp, and that this irrelevant sideshow distracted attention from the real war in the Mediterranean, which was against the Italians. They had the better of the argument, as the benefits sought by Churchill, Alexander and Pound were but temporary, while Vichy, though (fortunately) it did not take up arms fully against Britain, retaliated against Gibraltar, and *Strasbourg* was joined in Toulon a year later by a repaired *Dunkerque*, another British 'own goal'. French naval sourness remains to this day.

Relations with the Vichy French at Mediterranean ports appeared subsequently to be improving, perhaps fed by French distaste for Fascism overcoming anger at Mers-el-Kébir. In the light of this, when North was informed that a French squadron was sailing from Toulon through the Strait and to a destination somewhere in the Atlantic, passing Gibraltar on 11 September 1940, he and Somerville assumed that it should be allowed to proceed unhindered. They received no instructions to the contrary from the Admiralty, which, they assumed, had received the Naval Attaché's signal even earlier than Gibraltar. Moreover, they assumed that the French would turn south for Casablanca or possibly Dakar. Logic (and local intelligence) indicated that the French would not go to a German-occupied Biscay port, as they would be seized, losing the partial freedom they had enjoyed at Toulon.

North had had them shadowed and identified as they passed the Rock; they showed no hesitation in saying who they were; signals passed between the two sides were friendly but they do not appear to have been asked for their destination. Once in the Atlantic, however, it was difficult to track them and less easy to stop them. The Admiralty, determined to corral what was left of the French Navy, nevertheless leapt into action and ordered *Renown* and available destroyers to pursue them. Somerville, having anticipated the order, had brought *Renown* to readiness; she had been berthed at the South Mole since 3 September, occupied in giving leave, oiling and painting ship [20, 21].<sup>2</sup> Both Somerville and North assumed that Force H was a detached force under direct Admiralty control and that either it, or Somerville, ordered the squadron to sea. North, who assumed he had no control over Force H, instituted aerial reconnaissance in the Atlantic in an effort to discover the ships' destination; the aircraft

<sup>1</sup>Res Minr: holders included Oliver Lyttelton, Harold Macmillan, Richard Casey.

<sup>2</sup>Ship's Log: *Renown*, 3–11 Sept. 1940, ADM 53/113076.

reported later that they were headed south to Dakar. They were en route there in a bid to save the French equatorial African colonies from Gaullist takeovers. Even if they had been intended to augment the defences of Dakar (which was attacked unproductively by an Anglo-Gaullist force on 23 September 1940), however, though they constituted a fast and relatively powerful force, they were unlikely to have added materially to the port's defences. Their speed and potential power nevertheless made it doubtful that *Renown* and a handful of small, short-legged destroyers would have been able to overtake and overwhelm them. Somerville's quartering of the ocean wastes was, therefore, ultimately fruitless.

Thus ended the first phase of *l'affaire français* but it had still a long course to run. What did rankle with Pound particularly was North's apparent lack of action and initiative and his failure to give proper direction to Force H; this reinforced Pound's reaction to North's dissent from the decision on the *Force de Raid* – and an earlier gloomy prognosis about Gibraltar's chances in the war.<sup>1</sup> Pound's rage at North (it was nothing less) was seconded by Alexander, who would have removed FOCNA after the letter of 4 July [2]. Churchill, too, was an early advocate of North's relief, though there is no evidence that he was implicated in the Board's decision to recall him. Many naval friends of North (and at first North himself) believed that he had been made the scapegoat for the failure of operation 'Menace', particularly as awkward questions were asked in Parliament after its failure on 23 September; there is absolutely no evidence of this – 'Menace' is not mentioned. Pound based North's relief mainly on his perceived lack of initiative and failure to take instant and drastic action on receipt of the Naval Attaché's signal, and partly on the earlier incidents, which had undermined his faith in North; 'doing nothing' was not an option in Pound's view, and he had made a similar criticism of Rear Admiral Tomkinson, in command of the Atlantic Fleet at the time of the Invergordon Mutiny in 1931.<sup>2</sup>

North and Somerville were uncertain about the command structure concerning Force H; unsure of Force H's laid-down tasks, later clarified [54]; poorly informed of the government's changing attitude to Vichy and its warships, and of operation 'Menace'; and out of touch with the mood in Britain, especially in Whitehall. They made several dubious assumptions. Aside from the fact that one should never easily assume, especially in wartime and more particularly at such a volatile and dangerous time as this, they relied on local intelligence which (though true) was circumstantial and largely uncorroborated. They interpreted the order setting up Force

<sup>1</sup>For a fuller treatment, see Robin Brodhurst, *Churchill's Anchor: The Biography of Admiral of the Fleet Sir Dudley Pound* (Barnsley, 2000), pp. 167–71.

<sup>2</sup>See Brodhurst, *Churchill's Anchor*, pp. 79–85.

H to infer Admiralty control and took little initiative themselves – though Somerville went some way to exercising it by bringing *Renown* to readiness. They assumed, further, that the Admiralty high command knew about the Madrid signal at least as soon as Gibraltar; that was not the case, for although the signal was received and in good time, the officer accepting it (Captain R. H. Bevan, Director of Operations (Foreign)) did nothing with it.<sup>1</sup> Bevan was handed the signal, marked 'Immediate', at 0600 on 11 September but later, when on duty, forgot to act upon it; what saved him from Churchill's great wrath was that senior Admiralty officers failed also to recognise its importance and urgency – though Pound, hearing about it in mid-morning, did so and acted at once upon it.

North should have sent a signal from Gibraltar shortly after the Madrid message came in, repeating it, stating an intended course of action and asking for an early Admiralty response; that would have forced the Admiralty into prompt action, even if its own copy of the Madrid signal had failed to do so. It would certainly have been folly for French ships intending to stay neutral to go to a Biscay port, handing themselves to the enemy – but perhaps the ships wished to throw in their lot with the Axis, just as some Frenchmen had rallied to 'Free France'. North and Somerville should have covered that eventuality, even if *Renown* and destroyers were unable to find, turn back or fight the French squadron. After all, the movement was of a sizeable and powerful squadron, and perhaps presaged a larger movement. There may have been vagueness in Admiralty instructions and straws in the wind of a more amenable French attitude but there could have been no mistaking the general tenor of the Admiralty's (and the Government's) hard policy towards all things Vichy between the French armistice and the Dakar attack. It would have been prudent for North to enquire promptly which end of the Admiralty dog – the bared teeth or the wagging tail – was to be believed.

This is a harsh assessment – but the Admiralty was culpable, too, for it did not keep North and Somerville fully informed on the French situation, it did not give them crystal-clear orders and a definite command structure – the original Force H order did not mention FOCNA and referred only to the Italian enemy – and its communication procedure was clearly faulty. The Foreign Office, too, failed for several days to decrypt the signal of 9 September from the Consul General at Tangier. The situation, moreover, was unique; in the twentieth century, Britain had not had to deal with a former ally that had reached an accommodation with the enemy, and neither side, nor the French, knew how permanent or

<sup>1</sup>Capt R. H. Bevan: Capt 1935; DOD (F) 1939; *Leander* (RNZN) Sept. 1940; training posts, 1943–44. It looks rather as though Pound got him out from the Admiralty speedily, before Churchill's wrath descended.

serious this was. From the Prime Minister downwards, the British command structure was operating in the dark in the summer and early autumn of 1940. The somewhat confusing nature of the orders North received between 4 and 12 July betrays an atmosphere of uncertainty and lack of clarity in London. Pound did not help matters (and surely sparked the debate) by accusing North of dereliction of duty, instead of merely recalling him.<sup>1</sup> Even when the Admiralty came to redraft the orders for Force H after this incident, it had difficulty stating them in a form which was unambiguous.

North believed he was right in what he did – or did not – do; most senior officers agreed with him. If he was in the wrong, however, there was sufficient vagueness in Admiralty orders and a lack of adequate information, in addition to the serious accusations laid against him, to justify the enquiry for which he sought. He had to wait until after Pound had died, Alexander was in opposition and Churchill had left Downing Street before anything approaching it ensued. Most of the flag officers of the day believed he was ill-served. Even if he deserved to be recalled early, they felt he also deserved a fair hearing. The case for an appeal – and an indictment of the whole course of Admiralty conduct – was best stated by Admiral of the Fleet Lord Chatfield. He was unable because of illness to be present at a meeting of Admirals of the Fleet with Mr Macmillan but sent a letter (with which his fellow Admirals of the Fleet were in agreement). Chatfield, who had been First Sea Lord little more than a year before Pound acceded, expressed the situation succinctly, cogently and judiciously; it represented a severe indictment of the Board of 1940 and refusal of subsequent Boards to grant North's undoubted right to a hearing, or a least a statement of apology of some kind [57], though the Admiralty had gone a long way to admitting its responsibility – and absolving North (and Somerville) – in Pound's (internal) note to Alexander of 4 October 1940 [33].

• The Admiralty made several errors. It omitted to issue clear orders and when it changed its instructions did not cancel previous ones. It failed to act promptly on significant evidence – Naval Attaché, Madrid's signal [11], which spoke of an unusual and major French naval movement out of the Mediterranean (which might have been the harbinger of a wholesale escape by French naval forces at Mediterranean ports). The Foreign Office, as yet unadjusted to total war, was lax in not deciphering immediately the message from Consul General, Tangier, and passing it

<sup>1</sup>Pound, ever the staff officer, sought also to justify his relief of Adm. Sir Henry Harwood, then C-in-C, Levant, in 1943, thus giving Harwood ample cause for complaint. Simpson (ed.), *The Cunningham Papers*, II, *The Triumph of Allied Sea Power, 1942–1946* (Navy Records Society, Aldershot, 2006), pp. 72, 74, 101.

on to the Admiralty as a matter of urgency [10]. Pound, at least, recognised that the Naval Attaché's signal could be significant. It is understandable that the unchallenged passage of Vichy ships, coupled with North's earlier official protest and grim forecast for Gibraltar's wartime future, tipped the scales in favour of North's replacement. Where Pound went wrong was in attaching reasons to the relief, thus giving North the historic and inalienable right to some means of defending himself against this major indictment. This denial was compounded in future years by a stubborn refusal to reconsider the case. It is hard to disagree with the verdict of Chatfield – and most other commentators on this sad case.

### *Abbreviations*

ACNS (F)	Assistant Chief of Naval Staff (Foreign)
Adm	Admiral
Atl	Atlantic
AM	Admiralty Message
AoF	Admiral of the Fleet
AT	Admiralty Telegram
BAD	British Admiralty Delegation [Washington, DC]
Bd of Ady	Board of Admiralty
C-in-C	Commander in Chief
Capt	Captain
Cdr	Commander
CG	Consul General
CNS	Chief of Naval Staff
CO	Commanding Officer
Con	Conservative [Party]
CSO	Chief Staff Officer
DNI	Director of Naval Intelligence
DOD (F)	Director of Operations Division (Foreign)
ent	entered
F	Fleet
FL	First Lord [of the Admiralty]
FO	Foreign Office
FOC	Flag Officer Commanding
FOCNA	Flag Officer Commanding North Atlantic
FSL	First Sea Lord
HM	His Majesty's
HQ	Head Quarters
k	knots

KR & AI	King's Regulations and Admiralty Instructions
Lab	Labour [Party]
Lib	Liberal [Party]
Lt	Lieutenant
Lt-Cdr	Lieutenant-Commander
Med	Mediterranean
MP	Member of Parliament
NA	Naval Attaché
NCAXF	Naval Commander Allied Expeditionary Force
PM	Prime Minister
Res Minr	Resident Minister
R	Royal
(R)	(Repeat) or (Repeated)
RA	Rear Admiral
RN	Royal Navy
SO	Senior Officer
SO (I)	Staff Officer (Intelligence)
t	tons
tt	torpedo tubes
VA	Vice Admiral
VA (Q)	Vice Admiral (Quartermaster)
VCNS	Vice Chief of Naval Staff
2SL, 3SL, etc.	Second (or Third, etc.) Sea Lord
6×15in	(calibre of guns)

### 1. *Admiralty to Flag Officers Home and Abroad*

1728, 28 June 1940

1. A detached Squadron known as Force H under the command of Vice Admiral Sir James Somerville has been constituted as follows:

HM Ships – *Ark Royal, Hood, Resolution, Valiant, Arethusa, Faulknor, Foxhound, Fearless, Escapade, Forrester, Foresight, Escort.*

2. The following ships will join Force H when they enter the limits of the North Atlantic

HM Ships – *Nelson, Enterprise, Delhi, Fame, Fury,*

HM Canadian Ships – *St Laurent, Skeena.*

3. Force H will for the present be based at Gibraltar.

4. Subject to any instructions which may be given by the Admiralty the tasks of Force H will be –

(a) To prevent units of the Italian Fleet from breaking out of the Mediterranean.

(b) To carry out offensive operations against the Italian Fleet and Italian coasts.<sup>1</sup>

## 2. *North to Carter*

4 July 1940

On the conclusion of Operation 'Catapult' I desire to forward for the information of Their Lordships the following notes which I made regarding the discussions which preceded that operation. I have just read these notes to Admirals Somerville and Wells on their return to Gibraltar and they state they are in full agreement with them.

2. Vice Admiral Somerville arrived at Gibraltar p.m. 30 June [1940], and on arrival disclosed to me the Government intentions about Oran. I immediately said that I was absolutely opposed to the use of force, that the French would probably fight and that Admiral Gensoul had said he would submit to no other power taking control of his ships.

3. At a meeting on board *Hood* that evening attended by Admirals Somerville, Wells and myself and the Captains of ships concerned, all the Flag Officers and Captains present were opposed to the use of force. Opinion against the use of force was so strong that I felt an official protest must be made and I told Admiral Somerville next morning that I was considering a separate protest. I also made a suggestion that he should be authorised to withdraw his force at the last moment without using force and he said he would commend this suggestion in his telegram to the Admiralty. I said if he sent me a copy of his telegram and it appeared emphatic enough, I would not send a separate protest. He later showed me his telegram and said he had not mentioned me specifically as I had already given my opinion to the Admiralty in another telegram (1220/25/6) [not reproduced]. His telegram (1220/1/7) [not reproduced] appeared to fulfil what was wanted, but at the same time, I did not resolve that I might send another message of protest. I completely abandoned this idea on reading AM0103/2/7 [not reproduced] addressed to the Vice Admiral, Force H in which it was stated that the Government was determined to

<sup>1</sup>*Ark Royal*: carrier, 1938, 22,000t, 31k., 60 a/c, 16×4.5in. *Hood*: battlecruiser, 1920, 42,000t, 31k, 8×15in, 12×5.5in, 8×4in, 6tt. *Resolution*: battleship, 1916, 29,150t, 20k, 8×15in, 12×6in, 8×4in. *Valiant*: battleship, 1916, modernised 1934–37, 31,520t, 24k, 8×15in, 20×4.5in. *Arethusa*: cruiser, 1935, 5,220t, 32.5k, 6×6in, 8×4in, 6tt. *Faulknor*: destroyer leader, 1935, 1,475t, 36k, 5×4.7in, 8tt. *Foxhound*, *Fearless*, *Escapade*, *Forester*, *Escort*, and *Fame*, *Fury*: destroyers, 1934–35, 1,375t, 36k, 4×4.7in, 6tt. *Enterprise*: cruiser, 1926, 7,580t, 33k, 7×6in, 3×4in, 16tt. *Nelson* (battleship), *Delhi* (cruiser), & destroyers *St Laurent*, *Skeena* do not appear to have joined Force H.

use force, and that this decision had been come to after the receipt and consideration of the message from Vice Admiral, Force H.<sup>1</sup>

4. I felt that nothing more could be done. Admiral Somerville shared my apprehensions and said that the carrying out of this operation was utterly repugnant to him.

5. On attending the meeting in *Hood* to discuss the actual carrying out of the operation, I emphasized the importance of making sure the reason for the arrival of the Fleet off Oran should be known to all Officers and men of the French Fleet before any action was taken. Admiral Somerville said he quite agreed and was making most careful arrangements to this end.

6. In spite of the Admiralty decisions I still hoped that when it came to the point, if it was found that resistance was to be expected, there might be time for the Admiralty to cancel the use of force but I now understand that instructions were given to the Vice Admiral, Force H that the use of force was not to be delayed.

7. It is realised of course that the final decision on the necessity for this operation was undoubtedly governed by factors of which we are not aware. At the same time it may be of value to place on record the views which prevailed here, in the light of our knowledge of the situation.

### 3. *Carter to North*

17 July 1940

With reference to your submission X163/465 of 4 July [2], I am to inform you that the opinions of Senior Officers are always of value before an operation is carried out, that once the operation has taken place Their Lordships strongly deprecate comments on a policy which has been decided by the Admiralty in the light of factors which were either known, or unknown to officers on the spot.

In this case Their Lordships were never under the delusion that the French Fleet would not fight in the last instance, and this fact was taken fully into consideration in the preliminary deliberations.

The contents of the first part of paragraph 6 of your letter show a most dangerous lack of appreciation of the manner in which it is intended to conduct the war.

Their Lordships fully recognised how repugnant this operation would be to all officers concerned but they cannot allow such considerations to

<sup>1</sup>Operation 'Catapult': hobbling of French fleet at Mers-el-Kébir, 3 July 1940. Simpson, *Somerville Papers*, pp. 37–47, 86–113.

influence decisions in war and are surprised that comment of the kind received should be made.<sup>1</sup>

#### 4. *Admiralty to North, and all Flag Officers.*

1924/4 July 1940

As a result of the action at Oran, the intentions of the Bordeaux government are at present uncertain, but it is possible we may be at war with France shortly. HM ships are, for the present, to be guided by the following instructions.

2. Ships are not to approach inside 20 miles of coast of France or French colonial possessions in those areas where French submarines may be operating as French Admiralty have issued warning that British ships will be attacked without warning up to that distance from coast.

[Part 2]

1939/4 July 1940

3. Ships must be prepared for attack but should not (R) not fire first shot.

4. Contact with equal or superior French forces should be avoided, as whilst it is desirable to get control of as many French ships as possible, it would not be to our advantage to incur an equivalent loss in so doing.

5. If a definitely inferior French force is met action should be taken as follows:

(a) The French force is to be ordered to stop and if necessary forced to do so.

[Part 3]

2005/4 July 1940

(b) An officer is then to be sent on board and is to convey in writing HM Government's instructions that French force should proceed to a British port in company with HM ship.

(c) The French CO is to be informed that C O of HM ship has orders to use force if necessary and that it is much hoped that this will not be the case.

(d) The French CO should be informed that our object is that French ships do not fall into enemy hands, as was promised by Admiral Darlan.

(e) The [French] CO is to be informed that Officers and ship's company will be repatriated.

<sup>1</sup>Pound drafted most of these comments and the letter went through numerous drafts in the Admiralty.

5. *North to Admiralty*

2014/5 July 1940

Request clarification of action in event of French warships passing through the Strait.

6. *Admiralty to North*

0226/6 July 1940

Comply with para. 3 of my 2005/4/7/40 [4].

7. *Admiralty to North*

0241/12 July 1940

(a) *Richelieu* has now been dealt with and [?] *Jean Bart* could not complete for a considerable period even at her building yard.

I ... We shall of course however reserve the right to take action [?] in regard to French warships proceeding to an enemy controlled Port.

(d) Pending further instructions ships must be prepared to attack when meeting a French warship but should not (R) not fire first shot.

8. *Alexander to Churchill*

17 July 1940

I attach a copy of the Minute which was received at the Admiralty on 9 July which I mentioned to you a few days' ago, together with a copy of the reply I had authorised and sent.

I would add that I suggested to the First Sea Lord that it should be for consideration to supersede FOCNA but he does not think there is a strong enough case for this.

9. *Churchill to Alexander*

20 July 1940

It is evident that Admiral Dudley North has not got the root of the matter in him, and I should be very glad to see you replace him by a more resolute and clear-sighted Officer.

10. *Consul General Tangier to North (R) Foreign Office*

1824/9 September 1940

Following received from Jacques.<sup>1</sup>

French Squadron in Mediterranean may try to pass Strait of Gibraltar proceeding westward for unknown destination. This attempt may be timed to take place within the next 72 hours.

11. *NA Madrid to SO (I) Gibraltar (R) DNI<sup>2</sup>*

1809/10 September 1940

French Admiralty's to me begins Please advise Naval Authorities Gibraltar departing from Toulon 9 September three cruisers type *Georges Leygues* and three French cruisers type *le Fantasque* and which will pass Strait a.m. 11th September. National [?] fully painted ends. Probability not known.<sup>3</sup>

12. *North to ships on patrol, Wishart, Hotspur<sup>4</sup>*

0215/11 September 1940

Report reliability unassessed states that three cruisers *Georges Leygues* class and three French cruisers *le Fantasque* class all from Toulon will pass Strait today 11th. Report immediately if sighted.

13. *Hotspur to North*

0445/11 September 1940

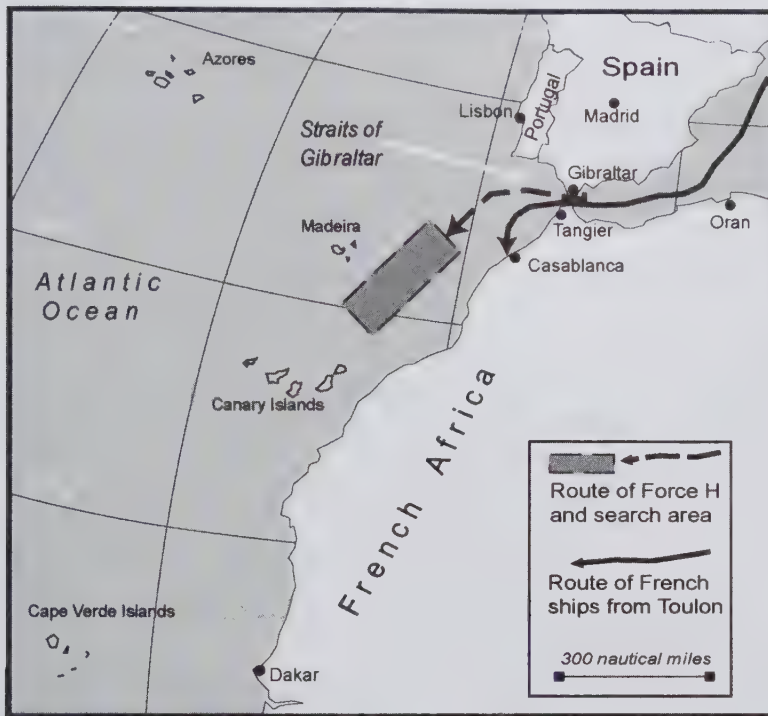
Six unknown ships burning navigation lights in position 036°00'N, 004°01'W steering 270°. Am shadowing.

<sup>1</sup>'Jacques': French Naval officer, supplying secret information to British.

<sup>2</sup>SO (I), Gibraltar: Cdr G. H. Birley: Cdr Dec. 1938; SO (I), Gibraltar, Jan. 1939; Naval Intelligence 1942. DNI: Adm J. H. Godfrey RA 1939; DNI 1939–42; VA & FOC, R Indian Navy 1943–46.

<sup>3</sup>*Georges Leygues*, *Gloire*, *Montcalm*: French cruisers, 1937, 7,600t, 34k, 9×6in, 8×3.5in, 4tt. *Le Fantasque*, *Le Malin*, *L'Audacieux*; French super-destroyers, 1934, 2,569t, 37k, 5×5.5in, 9tt.

<sup>4</sup>*Wishart*: destroyer, 1920, 1,150t, 32k, 4×4.7in, 3tt. *Hotspur*: destroyer, 1936, 1,340t, 36k, 4×4.7in, 8tt.



# VIII The North Atlantic and the Western Mediterranean, June–September 1940

## 14. *North to Hotspur*

0555/11 September 1940

' Cease shadowing.

## 15. *North to ships on patrol, Hotspur, Wishart*

0611/11 September 1940

My 0215 [12]. No action beyond reporting is to be taken.

**16. North to Admiralty**

0617/11 September 1940

NA Madrid's 1809/10 [11]. *Hotspur* sighted lights of six ships probably warships steaming West at high speed. Position at 0515/11 was 036°003'N, 004°014'W. I directed *Hotspur* to take no action.

**17. North to Admiralty**

0711/11 September 1940

My 0617 [16] intend to keep touch with this force by air and will report probable destination.<sup>1</sup>

**18. Admiralty to Somerville and North**

1239/11 September 1940

HMS *Renown* and all available destroyers steam for full speed [20, 21].

**19. Admiralty to Foreign Office, North, etc.**

1429/11 September 1940

- A. If French Force is proceeding Southward inform them there is no objection to their going to Casablanca but that they cannot be permitted to go to Dakar which is under German influence.
- B. If Force appears proceeding Bay Ports inform them this cannot be permitted as these ports are in German hands.
- C. In (A) and (B) minimum force to be used to ensure compliance.

**20. Orders to Steam: Renown**

11 September 1940

0545	Come to one hour's notice.
1020	Revert to two hours' notice.
1330	Raised steam for full speed.

<sup>1</sup>Saro London flying boat: 1934, 2×920hp, 155mph.

**21. *Extract from Ship's Log: Renown***

11 September 1940

1619                      Slipped and proceeded.  
 1802                      24 knots.  
 1819                      290°. Zig zag 15.

**22. *North to ships and authorities North Atlantic Station, SO (I), Force M, Ark Royal, C-in-C South Atlantic (R) Admiralty***<sup>1</sup>

1316/11 September 1940

French Forces consisting of cruisers *Georges Leygues*, *Gloire*, *Montcalm*. Light cruisers *le Malin*, *le Fantasque*, *L'Audacieux* passed westwards 0837. Position 1200/11 035°N, 064°W steering 213°, 20 knots.

**23. *Admiralty to Somerville and North***

1347/11 September 1940

My 1239/11 [18]. Proceed to sea and endeavour obtain contact French Force. Fresh instructions follow.

**24. *Somerville to Admiralty***

1437/11 September 1940

Your 1347 [22]. *Renown* and three destroyers sailing about 1600. Three more destroyers recalled from hunting U-boats will leave Gibraltar 1800.

**25. *North to Ships on patrol***

1713/11 September 1940

It is possible that more Units of French Fleet may pass Strait Westbound at full speed early tomorrow 12 September. Report immediately if sighted but otherwise take no action.

<sup>1</sup>Force M: the Dakar invasion force, under VA Sir J. Cunningham (1885–1962) V A & 1 Cruiser Squadron, Med & Home Fs 1939–40; 4SL 1941–43; Adm & C-in-C, Levant & Med 1943–46; FSL 1946–48 AoF 1948. C-in-C, S Atl: V Adm Sir G. D'Oyly-Lyon.

26. *Admiralty to Somerville (R) North*

2006/11 September 1940

My 1429/11 [19] and FOCNA [North] 1636/11 [not reproduced].

Establish patrol as necessary so that French Force can be intercepted if they sail southward from Casablanca.

27. *Admiralty to North (R) Somerville*

2301/11 September 1940

Your 1636 [not reproduced]. Endeavour to obtain information through Tangier [?] of ultimate destination of French Force.

28. *NA Madrid to SO (I) Gibraltar (R) DNI*

1033/12 September 1940

Your 0944/11 September [not reproduced] nothing certain. French Naval Attaché says destination must be Casablanca Dakar or French Colonial port and Explanation clear in Armistice about French being allowed to retain all Naval Forces in Colonies. This is only a guess but probable. He was told in Vichy by Darlan that no ships would get into German hands.

[French] Naval Attaché stated classed ships could not disorganise [?] escort convoys.<sup>1</sup>

29. *Consul General Tangier to North*

0100/13 September 1940

2. Three French cruisers *Georges Leygues* type and three destroyers *le Terrible* type arrived Casablanca from Toulon 1600/11 September.<sup>2</sup> They will only stay there for a short time and then proceed to Dakar and [?] Duala [?]. At Dakar they will probably embark troops to tackle situation at Duala. Object of cruisers is therefore

(a) To preserve Dakar for Vichy.

(b) To try to combat de Gaulle move in Equatorial Africa (Duala). *Primauguet* is already in Dakar.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>French NA: Contre-Amiral J. R. Delaye (1888–1984): NA, Spain, 1927–28, 1939–42; Contre Amiral 1941; joined Free French 1942; French Mission, Gibraltar; ret 1945.

<sup>2</sup>*Le Terrible* was of same class as *le Fantasque* but was not present.

<sup>3</sup>*Primauguet*: Fr cruiser, 1926, 7,250t, 33k, 8x6.1in, 12tt.

Several large cruisers and destroyers and possibly *Strasbourg* were to have left Toulon 11 September for Atlantic for unknown destination but believed to be Dakar but at last moment order was cancelled. Casablanca naval authorities only heard of this cancellation this morning reason for it is unknown.

Jacques did not hear mention of ships going North towards England. Cancellation of second sailing may only be temporary.

### 30. *Admiralty to North (R) Somerville*

1800/27 September 1940

At what time was NA Madrid's 1809/10 September [11] received and what action if any was taken on it[?].

### 31. *North to Admiralty (R) Somerville*

2358/27 September 1940

[Signal] [11] was received at 0008/11 and passed to forces at sea at 0215.

*Hotspur* sighting report received 0512 and passed to Admiralty in my 0617/11 [16] immediately. ...

*Hotspur* and ships on patrol ordered in my 0611 to take no action beyond reporting.

French ships passed Europa [Point] at 0830 and were shadowed by aircraft until arriving Casablanca in accordance with my 0711/11 [17] immediate to Admiralty.<sup>1</sup>

### 32. *Admiralty to North*

0233/2 October 1940

AM 0241/12 July [7] made it clear that we should take action against French warships proceeding to enemy controlled ports.

The probable composition of force sighted by *Hotspur* at 0515/11 September was indicated in NA Madrid's 1809/10 September [11].

A report in writing is to be forwarded as to why no action was taken in Gibraltar to order *Renown* to sea on receipt either of NA's 1809/10 or *Hotspur*'s reporting signal in case these ships proceeded Northward.

<sup>1</sup>Europa Point: SE tip of Gibraltar peninsula.

33. *Pound to Alexander*

4 October 1940

The information the Prime Minister asked for is as follows:—

In order that the *Renown* might have been in a position to get ahead of the French ships as they passed through the Strait of Gibraltar, it would have been necessary to take action previous to the information that *Hotspur* gave, ...[13].

This advance information might have been obtained either from FO telegram No.340 from HM Consul General, Tangier [10], or from NA Madrid's signal 1809/10 [September 1940] [11]. As you are aware, the FO telegram was not circulated until the forenoon of 14 September. NA, Madrid's telegram was received in the Admiralty at 2350/10 [September] and as soon as deciphered was reported to the Duty Captain, who in turn called DOD (F) and showed him the signal, but the latter unfortunately took no action. Captain Bevan, the DOD (F) concerned, has since left the Admiralty, but he has now been informed that he has incurred Their Lordships' displeasure on account of this incident. Consequently neither of these telegrams, giving advance information of the passage of the French ships, having reached either VCNS or myself, the first intimation we had was the receipt of the information contained in *Hotspur*'s signal, which was passed to the Admiralty by FOCNA.<sup>1</sup> This signal was not received in the Admiralty until after the French ships had actually passed through the Strait.

Immediately it came to my knowledge I ordered *Renown* to raise steam, and she was subsequently ordered to sea. Admiral North, the FOCNA, has been asked for his reasons in writing why *Renown* was not ordered to raise steam immediately *Hotspur*'s signal was received [13, 18, 20]. ...

It must be realised, however, that even if everything had gone right there could have been no certainty whatever that these French ships would not have been able to evade the patrol which *Renown* and other ships were maintaining South of Casablanca. The interception of ships of the high speed of the French ships is a very difficult thing unless a very large number of ships are available to do this.

<sup>1</sup>VCNS: Acting VA (later Acting Adm Sir) Tom Phillips: RA & VCNS 1939; A/VA 1940; C-in-C & A/Adm, EF 1941; lost in *Prince of Wales* 10 Dec. 1941.

34. *North to Carter*

6 October 1940

Be pleased to lay before Their Lordships this report, which is forwarded in compliance with AM 0233/2 October 1940 [32].

2. The reason why no action was taken was because my Intelligence did not lead me to believe that these ships could be going to Northern Ports. On the contrary it pointed the other way. I know that Their Lordships had at least as much information as I had, and probably more concerning our relations with the Vichy Government. I had every confidence that Their Lordships would have informed me if they considered they might be going North, and would have instructed me to exercise the right reserved in para 1 of AM 0241/12 July 1940 [7].

[For ease of comparison of the respective remarks, Dudley Pound's comments, which form the first part of [35], are given here in *italics*; they are not repeated.]

**Dudley Pound:** *His job was to stop them if they did go north.*

3. Since receiving AM 0241/12 July 1940 I had received no information which led me to think that relations with the Vichy Government had changed for the worse. I had reason to believe from my local Intelligence that the attitude of the French Navy was becoming less hostile and this was confirmed when I received NA, Madrid's 1842/5 September, to the DNI [not reproduced]. This reported a distinct improvement in the attitude of the French Navy, and indicated that Admiral Darlan himself desired contact to be maintained with the British NA at Madrid. On receiving NA, Madrid's 1809/10 September [11], it appeared to me that this improvement in attitude was bearing fruit and that some of the Naval forces in Toulon intended to break away to French Colonial ports. This opinion was strengthened by the following facts:

- (a) Formal notice had been given of the time of passage through the Strait.
- (b) That they made no attempt at concealment, and burned all lights at night.
- (c) That they reported their mission at once when asked.

**Dudley Pound:** *There was no guarantee that they were not going north. NA Madrid's 1809/10 said 'Destination not known'.*

4. As regards the actual ordering of *Renown* to sea, AM 1728 [1] and 1733 [not reproduced], both of 28 June 1940, make it clear that Force H constitutes a detached squadron under the independent command of Vice

Admiral Sir James Somerville, charged with certain special duties to be carried out subject to any instructions which might be given by the Admiralty. *Renown's* movements have, therefore, always been ordered by the Admiralty, or by the Flag Officer Commanding, Force H and in no instance by me.

**Dudley Pound:** *AT 1724/28 said a 'detached squadron' – there was nothing about it being an independent command as stated by FOCNA. Because movements of Force H have generally been ordered by the Admiralty there is no reason why FOCNA should not take action in emergency.*

At the same time, in any emergency of which the Admiralty had no previous knowledge, I should not have hesitated to order *Renown* to sea, had it been desirable, but this cannot be considered as being the case on this occasion as presumably NA, Madrid's 1809/10 September [11] was passed to the Admiralty direct and so I considered that there had been time for Their Lordships to order whatever action, if any, they might consider necessary. Actually, Flag Officer Commanding, Force H brought his ships to one hour's notice and awaited instructions from Their Lordships as to action to be taken.

**Dudley Pound:** *Here he contradicts his argument at C [paragraph 4] and says that under certain circumstances he would have ordered Renown to sea. All this argument about 'independent command' therefore falls to the ground. I cannot endorse the action of an officer who takes this line that because there has been time for the Admiralty to give orders and they have not done so therefore he does nothing.* [The underlining may be Alexander's].

5. I arranged for aerial reconnaissance, as reported in my 0711/11 September 1940 [17]. This confirmed that the ships were not proceeding to the North.

**Dudley Pound:** *The aerial reconnaissance need not have stopped them going north.*

6. If Their Lordships consider that I should have ordered *Renown* to sea, I regret with the information at my disposal, there was no reason for me to take such action.

### 35. Pound to Alexander

8 October 1940

...

The general tenor of this letter gives me a most unfavourable impression as it depicts an attitude of mind that is always waiting for orders instead of looking to take the initiative and forestall any order from the Admiralty. [The underlining in both cases may be Alexander's].

What he might have done was to order *Renown* to sea and at the same time inform the Admiralty what he had done. If the Admiralty did not like what he had done they could cancel it.

Under the circumstances Admiral North no longer retains my confidence.

Key officers are of no value if they do not possess initiative and accept responsibility.

There are two alternatives

- (a) To relieve Admiral North in due course.
- (b) To order him to haul his flag down and proceed home at his first suitable opportunity.

I am in favour of (b) and would propose the following action.

A. A draft signal to be prepared saying that Their Lordships are not satisfied with his explanation, giving reasons.

B. When (A) has been approved by First Lord a telegram to be sent saying that Their Lordships are not satisfied with his explanation given in his letter and that he is to haul his Flag down on a certain day and proceed home. (The date of his hauling his flag down to be fitted in with a possible passage home.)

C. Captain Duke, his present CSO (an able officer) to be made Commodore (either 1st or 2nd Class) Commanding North Atlantic until arrival of North's relief.<sup>1</sup>

### 36. *Carter to Alexander*

10 October 1940

I feel myself that I should, at all events at this stage, much prefer it if the letter merely limited itself to saying that 'it should, in Their Lordships' opinion, have been plain to you that this was an occasion demanding every precaution, whether instructions had been sent from the Admiralty or not'.

This would provide the minimum of surface for purposes of future controversy.

If Admiral Sir Dudley North has lost the confidence of the First Sea Lord and yourself, that, of course, ends the matter so far as the tenure of his appointment is concerned. But I am anxious to avoid a full reasoned reply since, simply as a matter of argument, I don't feel too confident that Sir Dudley North hasn't the best of it.

<sup>1</sup>Capt R. G. Duke: Capt. 30 June 1932; CSO to FOCNA 13 Oct. 1939–Nov. 1941; CSO to C-in-C, Portsmouth 1941–45.

He is a person of influence who may well start a controversy, and we don't want to make the mistake of providing him with a letter from the Admiralty in which the argument might fail to convince others.

### 37. *Pound to Carter*

10 October 1940

With ref. to A of your minute to First Lord could you please say on what you base your remark that you are not confident that Admiral North has not the best of it.

Admiral North claims that Admiral Somerville's squadron was an Independent Command. So far as I can see there is nothing in AT 1724/28 [June] [1] to endorse this but it is possible that he bases his statement on AT 1733/28 [June] [not reproduced].<sup>1</sup>

I think the First Lord would wish this point be cleared up.

As regards KR and AI the second Para. of Art. 1026 appears relevant.<sup>2</sup>

The real point at issue seems to be whether an officer has any right to assume that a signal must have been received by the Admiralty just because it is addressed to the Admiralty.

I should be grateful if you would give me your opinion on the above.

### 38. *Carter to Pound*

11 October 1940

My doubts about entering into argument with Admiral Sir Dudley North, at all events at this stage, were mainly based on the consideration that it was an occasion when it was only to be expected that instructions would come from the Admiralty. However, it is no doubt true, as you said this morning, that the situation was such that it was essential to take every step to be ready for any action that might prove necessary.

I think the contingency of a signal not reaching the Admiralty cannot be entirely dismissed from the mind of a Flag Officer, but it does seem

<sup>1</sup>AT 1733/28 June 1940 cannot now be found. It is clear, however, that the Admiralty regarded AT 1728/28 June 1940 as the ruling order.

<sup>2</sup>KR & AI. No. 1026, second paragraph, states: 'He will not interfere with ships arriving or lying at ports within his station but not in sight of his flag, unless specially directed to take them under his orders; and, except in some emergency which does not admit of reference to the Admiralty, he is not to send any ship to sea except those which have specially been placed under his orders.'

rather a remote contingency unless there was some reason to suspect that communication had been interrupted.

I do not feel that the position of Force H was left quite as clear as it might have been. It seems true to say that it was an independent force but that nevertheless it would be entirely proper for the Flag Officer Commanding Officer North Atlantic to issue instructions to it if an emergency made this necessary.

I attach an alternative to the end of the draft letter on the lines discussed this morning [not reproduced]. It certainly seems wiser, as you suggest, to relieve him rather than to order him to haul down his flag.

My preference for a very short draft at this stage was really only caution. We should no doubt, at some stage, have to give a full answer to Admiral North and I really do not object to a longer draft.

### 39. *Minute by Carter*

12 October 1940

I feel that to prevent any future misunderstandings it might be wise to define a little more closely the relationship between FOC, Force H and FOCNA.

### 40. *Carter to North*

15 October 1940

Their Lordships have received and considered your letter X. 224/465 of 6 October [34], in which you have stated your reasons for omitting to order *Renown* to sea when you received the NA, Madrid's 1809/10 September [11] that French cruisers had left Toulon and would pass through the Strait or when you received *Hotspur's* signal reporting them.

The message from the NA, Madrid, had stated that the destination of these ships was not known. It could not be certain that they were not proceeding North and it was necessary to stop them if they did. Later aerial reconnaissance which showed that they were not proceeding to the Northward would not have prevented their doing so. That Force H was a detached squadron (AM 1724/28 June) [1] and that the movement of this force had in general been ordered by the Admiralty does not affect the issue.

The NA's signal was received by Gibraltar at 0008/11 September, but it was only received by SO, Force H at 0800/11 September.

*Hotspur's* report of the approach of the French ships was received at 0512/11 September [13], and it was presumably on this information that SO, Force H at 0530/11 September ordered *Renown* to come to one hour's notice for steam [20].

SO, Force H, in his report states that he considers the responsibility for intercepting these ships was his, but however much this may be the case the fact remains that the earliest information he received of the passage of these ships was about 0512, which left insufficient time for *Renown* to proceed to sea and intercept them.

Their Lordships are of opinion that on receipt of the NA's signal at 0008 [11], it was your duty to ensure that action was taken which would enable these ships to be intercepted, either on receipt of instructions from the Admiralty or without such instructions if the situation developed in such a manner as to need it.

Their Lordships cannot retain full confidence in an officer who fails in an emergency to take all prudent precautions without waiting for Admiralty instructions. They have accordingly decided that you should be relieved of your present command at the first convenient opportunity.

#### 41. *North to Carter*

1206/25 October 1940

Before Their Lordships take the action indicated in penultimate paragraph I submit that I may be allowed an opportunity to reply to certain statements contained in this letter.

#### 42. *Carter to North*

2222/25 October 1940

Your 1206/25. The opportunity you ask for is granted, your letter should be despatched by the first available opportunity.

#### 43. *Somerville to Carter*

*Renown*  
7 October 1940

Be pleased to inform Their Lordships that on my return to Gibraltar this forenoon I was shown a copy of AM 0233 of 2 October by FOCNA [32].

2. In view of the orders contained in AM 1724/28 June, para (4) [a], I have hitherto assumed that responsibility for intercepting enemy war vessels attempting to break out of the Western Mediterranean rested with the FOC, Force H. I also assumed that these orders were intended to include French war vessels if the latter had to be intercepted.

3. My reasons for not intercepting the French squadron referred to in AM 0233/2 October addressed to FOCNA are contained in my Report of Proceedings No. 60/8 of 17 September 1940.<sup>1</sup>

I have nothing to add to these reasons, except that I discussed the situation fully with FOCNA.

Rightly or wrongly, we were both of the opinion that, in view of what appeared to be the ample warning Their Lordships had received of the intended movement and notification of these vessels approaching the Strait, it was not desired to interfere with this movement or to provoke any sort of incident.

4. If, however, the action taken is considered to have been incorrect, I wish to accept full responsibility, since at the time in question I acted in the full belief that responsibility for any action taken with Force H rested with me.

#### 44. *Carter to Somerville*

15 October 1940

...

It is obvious, however, that as you did not receive NA, Madrid's signal 1809/10 September [11] until 0800/11 September, you were unable to take action on that signal in time to intercept the ships. This signal was received by the FOCNA at 0008/11 September and it was his duty as Senior Officer to see that the necessary action was taken.

. Their Lordships note that on receipt of *Hotspur's* signal at about 0512 [13] you took action at 0530 to bring *Renown* to one hour's notice for steam [20].

#### 45. *Somerville to Carter*

25 October 1940

Be pleased to submit for the attention of Their Lordships that I have been informed by the FOCNA, that he has been held to blame for not ordering

<sup>1</sup>Report of Proceedings, 17 Sept. 1940, Simpson, *Somerville Papers*, pp. 147–8.

Force H to sea on the occasion of a French squadron passing through the Strait of Gibraltar on 11 September 1940.

I note from the Admiralty letter M. 019708/40 of 15 October 1940 [44], that I am exonerated on the grounds that I did not receive sufficient warning of the impending movement to take action in time to intercept the ships in question.

I wish to be quite frank about this matter and to state that even if I had received sufficient notice to enable *Renown* and the one or two destroyers available to proceed to sea, I should have refrained from doing so for the reasons set forth in my Report of Proceedings No. 60/8 of 17 September 1940.<sup>1</sup>

I now consider that paragraphs (4) and (5) of my Report do not make this point sufficiently clear, and I should be most reluctant to feel that, if blame is to be attached to anyone in connection with this incident, I am to be exonerated because I failed to reply clearly and without any ambiguity my appreciation of the situation and my intentions consequent on that appreciation.

#### 46. *Note by Pound on Somerville's letter*

29 October 1940

In this letter Admiral Somerville acknowledges that even if he had received sufficient notice he would not have taken any action.

The fact however is that because he could not have known what he might have done it does not excuse Admiral North for not doing anything.

This semi-war against the French does place officers in difficult positions but in this case they were more lucky than is usually the case as they had Admiralty instructions to work on.

I do not consider any reply is required to this letter.

#### 47. *North to Admiralty*

7 November 1940

Be pleased to inform Their Lordships that I notice in their letter No. M.020769 of 31 October 1940 [not reproduced] I am again charged with omitting to order *Renown* to sea.

2. As pointed out in my letters No. X. 224/465 of 5 October 1940 and No. X. 246/03300 of 27 October 1940 [neither reproduced], there can be

<sup>1</sup>RoP, 17 Sept. 1940, Simpson, *Somerville Papers*, pp. 147–8.

no question of omission to perform my duty in this matter as I did carefully consider the whole question and came to the definite conclusion that it was not desirable to send the force to sea.

This decision was based upon what I had every reason to believe was the intended policy of H. M. Government.

3. Omission to perform one's duty is a serious charge and in this case I submit it is quite unjustified and not in accordance with fact and I therefore ask that it should be withdrawn and a more appropriate reason be substituted for relieving me of my command.

#### 48. *Minute by Pound*

12 November 1940

... Although it is not so stated, it appears that Admiral North would prefer a phrase such as 'Error of Judgment' to be substituted for 'Omission to perform his duty'.

\* \* \*

... any alteration of the wording at this stage might be construed as a sign of weakness in the Admiralty case. Moreover, as I see it, the situation is quite clear. Admiral North's instructions were that the French ships were to be prevented from proceeding to German occupied ports, and there was no guarantee that the forces proceeding through the Strait were not proceeding to the northward. In point of fact these ships proceeded to the southward but had they proceeded to the northward Admiral North would have been in no position to intercept them owing to his failure to order *Renown* to proceed to sea. I should call this failure 'Omission to perform one's duty' rather than 'Error of Judgment'.

'...

#### 49. *North to Admiralty*

21 November 1940

Be pleased to inform Their Lordships that in view of the fact that I am being relieved from my command for an alleged failure to perform my duty, which I deny, and which I can produce evidence to refute, I submit that I may be given an opportunity in due course to vindicate myself before whatever tribunal Their Lordships may see fit to appoint.

**50. North to Admiralty**

2 December 1940

As a sufficiently senior officer and local witnesses will be available submit that the enquiry asked for in my letter of 21 November [49] may be held after that mentioned in AM. 2348/29/11 [not reproduced].<sup>1</sup>

**51. Admiralty to North**

1122/4 December 1940

After fullest consideration Their Lordships reached a decision in your case and informed you accordingly and re-affirmed that decision after an appeal from you. In these circumstances no object is seen in re-opening the question and Their Lordships are therefore not prepared to grant the enquiry for which you ask.

**52. North to Admiralty**

8 December 1940

*Passage of three French cruisers and three French destroyers from Toulon through the Strait of Gibraltar on 11 September 1940*

In order to obtain a clear picture of the circumstances attending the passage of this force of the Strait of Gibraltar it is necessary to review our relations with the French after the attack by our forces on the French Fleet lying in harbour at Mers-el-Kébir (Oran). This attack took place on 3 July, and during the period immediately following this, our relations with the French were naturally somewhat confused, and it was anticipated that we might actually be at war with France at any time.

2. On 4 July instructions were issued by the Admiralty which stated that our ships meeting French ships should be prepared for attack but should not fire the first shot. Similar orders were issued by the French [4].

3. On 12 July the Admiralty revised their instructions, and issued a statement that the further maintenance of tension between the French Navy and ourselves was undesirable, and might even lead to war with that country. They had decided to take no further action against treacherous French ships in French Colonial or West African ports, but reserved the

<sup>1</sup>Cork and D'Oyly-Lyon were the senior officers, present to enquire into Somerville's conduct off Cape Spartivento. Simpson, *Somerville Papers*, pp. 64–8, 203–16.

right to take action in regard to French warships proceeding to enemy controlled ports [7]. It follows therefore that in early September the predominant impression in my mind was that the government policy was to avoid any incidents which might tend to restore the tension between the French and ourselves. Of what may have passed between HM Government and Vichy I have small knowledge, as little information on political progress was sent to me but, from my local intelligence, it was improving, although perhaps slowly. Information pointed to this improvement in attitude, and this was also further confirmed by a message from the Consul General at Tangier on 31 August in which he informed me that Admiral Ollive, the French Admiral in command at Casablanca, was shewing distinct signs of changing his view.<sup>1</sup> This, the Consul General regarded as significant as the Admiral was known to be fundamentally anti-British [not reproduced].

4. On 6 September an important message [not reproduced] was received by me from the Naval Attaché Madrid and repeated by him to the Admiralty. It was to the effect that the French Naval Attaché who had been on a visit to Vichy had returned with his attitude much improved and more friendly. He had seen Admiral Darlan who had instructed him to keep in close touch with our Naval Attaché, and to tell him that the French spirit of resistance was increasing, and that disarmament would not be real. Altogether the situation appeared to be much improved, and I imagined that it was largely the result of our recently changed policy towards the French, and our determination to avoid future incidents.

5. On 9 September the Consul General Tangier sent a telegram [10] to me and the Foreign Office, to say that he had received information, probably reliable, that a French Squadron in the Mediterranean might pass the Strait, going Westward, for an unknown destination during the next 72 hours. I had no reason to suppose that the Admiralty would fail to receive this message since the procedure followed was normal in all respects.

6. Just after midnight on 11 September I received a message [11] from the NA Madrid sent off from there at 6.0 p.m., and addressed to Admiralty also, to say that the French NA had informed him that three French cruisers and three large destroyers had left Toulon on 9 September, and that they would pass through the Strait a.m. on 11 September (that day). In view of what had so recently transpired it appeared clear to me that this force was taking advantage of an opportunity to leave Toulon for Casablanca in order to escape from the German and Italian control liable

<sup>1</sup>Adm E. L. H. Ollive (1882–1950): V Adm 1937; C-in-C, Med Sqdn 1937; C-in-C Med F 1939; C-in-C & Préfet Maritime, 4 Region, Algeria, July 1940–Oct. 1942; Adm Nov. 1940; ret 1943.

to occur at the former port. The fact that no instructions of any sort with regard to the interception of these ships had been received by me from the Admiralty after the CG Tangier's message, confirmed this conclusion, and I decided that no action should be taken to interfere with their passage through the Strait.

7. At that time a force of my destroyers was patrolling in a position about 100 miles to the Eastward of Gibraltar hunting a suspected submarine. This patrol was warned that the French ships might be expected, and at 0512 *Hotspur* reported sighting the ships which passed burning all their lights, and apparently at no pains to conceal their identity [13].

8. I consulted with Vice Admiral Sir James Somerville in *Renown* who was in command of Force H based at Gibraltar, and he agreed, that it was evident that the Admiralty wished no action taken in connection with the passage of the ships, notice of which must quite obviously have been received by them.

9. Consequently I saw no reason to send *Renown* to sea, and neither did the Vice Admiral, but his force, which had been at 2 hours' notice for sea was brought to one hour in order to meet any unexpected change in policy [20].

10. I had every reason to believe that the Admiralty must have received the message from the NA Madrid some two hours before it was received by me, and that they had therefore known since about 10.0 p.m. that the ships were approaching Gibraltar [11]. I had naturally thought therefore, that the movement was taking place with the full knowledge and approval of the Admiralty.

11. At about 9.0 a.m. on 11 September, the French force passed through the Strait. They signalled their names – some of them being ships we had known in Gibraltar. As it seemed so obvious that they were friendly, I made a signal to them 'Bon voyage' [not reproduced]. Merely to show that I was not alone in this opinion, on mentioning it to Admiral Somerville, he remarked that he was glad to hear it as he had intended to suggest it himself.

12. The continued silence from the Admiralty confirmed us in our opinion, that we were acting in accordance with Admiralty wishes. I had kept the Governor of Gibraltar informed by telephone as to what was happening and he agreed with me that everything pointed to it being a pleasant sign that the French Navy was now coming to its senses. I mention this only to show the convictions and opinions of all of us here.

13. I had already arranged for air reconnaissances and these made it quite clear that the ships were proceeding to Casablanca as I had expected.

It was not until 1.0 p.m. on that day that a signal was sent off from the Admiralty 1231 (some 12–14 hours after NA Madrid's telegram must have been received at the Admiralty) [11, 21, 22] was received directing *Renown* and all destroyers to raise steam for full speed. From a subsequent statement made in the House of Commons by the Prime Minister [quoted in 53], it appears that the First Lord and the First Sea Lord gave these orders themselves, when they received the information that the ships were passing or had passed the Strait. I can only assume that the opinions I held were shared by the Naval Staff, or else they would certainly have ordered me to send *Renown* and the destroyers to sea, on the receipt of the NA Madrid's telegram at 10.0 p.m. the night before.

14. Admiral Somerville was subsequently ordered to proceed to sea in *Renown* to endeavour to communicate with the French Force and inform them that whilst they could go to Casablanca, they were not to go further South. The French ships reached Casablanca as I had appreciated, but could not be intercepted by *Renown* before their arrival at that port. Having reached Casablanca their subsequent interception by *Renown* and the few destroyers available was problematical, and subsequently proved unsuccessful.

15. It has yet to be proved that the arrival of these ships and their crews had any real effect on the disastrous enterprise at Dakar.

16. Two days later, on the 13th, the CG, Tangier, sent me a message [29] to be passed to the Foreign Office and Admiralty which gave information as to possible movements of the French force – said to have emanated from the Navy Office, Casablanca. It confirmed that the force was probably bound for Dakar. The message also included what were presumably the CG, Tangier's own conclusions as to the object of the cruise, viz.

(a) To preserve Dakar for Vichy.

(b) To try to frustrate de Gaulle's moves in French Equatorial Africa.

17. The unsuccessful operation at Dakar, the orders for which were never even supplied to me, took place on 23 September and, as a reprisal, Gibraltar was heavily bombed by French aircraft on 24 and 25 September, about 80 bombers being used on the first day, and 100 on the second.

(During the second attack my Secretary was killed, a very serious loss to me, and one that has proved a considerable handicap in drafting my replies to Their Lordships' accusations.<sup>1</sup>)

18. On 27 September I received an immediate telegram from the Admiralty [30] to ask when I received NA, Madrid's telegram regarding the passage of the French warships, and what action I had taken on it. In view

<sup>1</sup>Sec to Adm North: Pay-Cdr J. E. D. Smith.

of subsequent events I cannot avoid connecting the date of this telegram with the fact that the Dakar enterprise had failed. [The attack on Dakar took place on 23 September.] On 2 October I received a message from the Admiralty [32] informing me that one paragraph of their message of 12 July [7] made it clear that action would be taken against French warships proceeding to enemy controlled ports, and ordering me to report in writing why no action had been taken to send *Renown* to sea when the message from Madrid was received, or on the report of the patrolling destroyers at 0512 [11 September] [13]. The meaning of this paragraph referred to was however very far from being clear. As mentioned before, the paragraph only stated that 'we shall of course reserve the right to take action in regard to French warships proceeding to enemy controlled ports'. 'Reserving the right' cannot to my mind be construed as an executive order to intercept ships, which I rightly judged were not going to Northern France.

19. I sent in my report [34], which embodied most of the points included here adding also that in actual fact, Force H and *Renown*, except when ordered to sea by Admiral Somerville himself, had always been operated direct by the Admiralty. In no instance had the force been ordered to sea by me, although I should not have hesitated to do so had I deemed it desirable. I felt quite justified in assuming that the absence of any orders from the Admiralty indicated that they considered, as I did, that no action was necessary.

20. The Admiralty replied to my letter remarking again that these ships might have gone to the North, and concluded their letter by informing me that I had failed in my duty and would be relieved of my command [40]. I protested and asked for a further opportunity to reply to certain statements in the letter [41]. This was granted and I wrote more fully but without avail [47]. It therefore appears that I am to be penalised for not taking proper precautions to prevent these French ships from proceeding to a destination which I had no reason to believe they were proceeding, and to which in fact they did not proceed.

21. It is interesting to examine the probable course of events had I, on my own initiative, sent *Renown* to sea with the intention of preventing the French ships from proceeding to Northern ports.

22. Any action taken by Force H would then have been directed solely towards preventing the French proceeding North and would not have been directed in any way towards interfering with their passage to the South, to Casablanca.

23. The Admiralty message (1429/11 September) [19] which gave FOC, Force H, the purport of the message to be communicated to the French ships, was received at 1529, at which time the French ships were on the point of entering Casablanca.

24. It is quite clear therefore that the question of whether Force H was at sea or in harbour had not the slightest bearing on whether the cruisers reached Casablanca or not.

25. The Prime Minister's statement in the House of Commons, mentioning Gibraltar, was the first indication to me that in some way or other an attempt might be made to fix the blame for the Dakar fiasco on me [quoted in 53]. My conscience however was so clear and the facts so plain, that I did not consider such a thing was possible. Vice Admiral Somerville with whom I had been in constant consultation agreed with my appreciation of the situation and the decision I made. So did His Excellency the Governor who was kept fully informed of all that occurred. So did all my staff. And so also (as I discovered subsequently in conversation) did Sir Samuel Hoare, Ambassador in Madrid.

26. To sum up – I submit that any impartial survey of all the circumstances attending this incident must inevitably lead to the conclusion that had the departure of these ships from the Mediterranean been regarded as a matter of prime importance there was ample time in which special instructions could have been issued to deal with the matter.

27. It must also appear obvious to any reasonable person that when it was subsequently appreciated that the arrival of these ships at Dakar had or might have exercised an adverse effect on the intended operation there, blame was laid on me, strangely enough, not for failing to stop the ships from proceeding to the South, but for not having taken steps to prevent them from proceeding to the North.

28. The fact of my being relieved must inevitably arouse considerable comment and it may well be thought that blame is attributable to me for the failure at Dakar and that I am the officer against whom disciplinary action has been taken as mentioned by the Prime Minister.

I feel therefore that it is in the public interest that the true facts should be brought to light.

29. [not used]

30. I consider that an impartial tribunal could not fail to establish the fact that my action on this occasion could by no stretch of the imagination have affected the outcome of what has been universally described as an ill-judged adventure.

31. It was for this reason that I asked for an enquiry into this incident. This request has been refused. I find myself in the position of a Flag Officer who, whilst endeavouring to serve the interests of his country to the best of his ability, and what a brother Flag Officer conceived to be the policy of HM Government, is now discredited, owing to an alleged failure to implement an ambiguous instruction, which had no connection with the issue involved.

53. *Minute by Pound*

23 January 1941

[Points which Admiral North has made]

- (a) *Why his reasons for not ordering Force H to sea were not asked for until 27 September 1940 [30], the French cruisers having passed Gibraltar on 11 September and operation MENACE having been carried out on 23 September.*

It was perfectly obvious on the day that the French cruisers passed through the Strait that Admiral North had not carried out his instructions but while operation MENACE was in progress the Naval Staff were too fully occupied to deal with a question which was in no way urgent.

- (b) *Admiral North now claims that the instructions for the manner in which French ships were to be dealt with on passing through the Strait were ambiguous.*
- (i) It is noted that these instructions were received by Admiral North on 12 July, and it is presumed that he considered them quite clear as, otherwise, it was his duty to ask the Admiralty what was meant.
- (ii) It is noted that in his reply, dated 6 October [34], giving his reasons for not sending *Renown* to sea, Admiral North made no reference at all to the orders being ambiguous. In fact, in paragraph 2 of his letter Admiral North states that the reason why no action was taken on this occasion was because 'My intelligence did not lead me to believe that these ships could be going to Northern ports'. This statement clearly proves that the instructions were so clear that if Admiral North had considered they were going to Northern ports he would have taken action.
- (c) *Admiral North claims that his relief from his appointment was caused by the failure of the Dakar operations and that the Prime Minister's statement in the House on 8 October is proof of this.*

The Prime Minister's statement which will be found in column 299 of Hansard for that day states:

'By a series of accidents, and some errors which have been made the subject of disciplinary action or are now subject to formal inquiry, neither the First Sea Lord nor the Cabinet were informed of the approach of these ships to the Strait of Gibraltar until it was too late to stop them passing through.'

There is nothing in this statement to give the impression that the failure to prevent these ships reaching Dakar was due to Admiral North having

failed to take action. Had Admiral North obeyed his instructions and taken action to prevent these ships proceeding to a Northern port, the Admiralty would have been in a position to have given orders to prevent them reaching Dakar. It is his failure to carry out his instructions to prevent the ships going North, had they shown any signs of doing so, for which Admiral North was blamed, not for failing to prevent the ships reaching Dakar.

- (d) *Admiral North attempted to lay the blame on the Admiralty for not having given him instructions as regards the interception of these ships.*
- (i) In this connection he asserts that the Officer in the Admiralty who failed to take action failed to do anything because this Officer must have held the same views as Admiral North that no action was necessary. The reply to this is that the Officer concerned was in bed when the signal was brought to him and failed to take immediate action which he acknowledges he should have done by reporting the signal at once to his Senior Officers.
- (ii) This is the fundamental difference in Admiral North's conception of what a Flag Officer should do and what the Admiralty consider he should do. Having received the instructions in AM 0241/12 July [7], it was Admiral North's duty as Senior Officer to take the necessary action to carry out these instructions and not assume that any further instructions would be received from the Admiralty. In this case it was certainly not necessary for the Admiralty to issue any supplementary instructions as they would assume that Admiral North would have already taken steps to act on the instructions he already had. In effect what Admiral North did was to take no action on receipt of NA Madrid's 1809/10 [11] which was received by him at 0008/11, that is on the morning of the day the ships actually passed through the Strait.

*Renown* was brought to one hour's notice at 0530/11 [20] by FO Force H. This was a half measure which could be of no use unless the force was ordered to sea.

Admiral North, however, takes the line that the ships having been brought to one hour's notice, it was up to the Admiralty to order them to sea. This is exactly why the Admiralty lost confidence in Admiral North in that he failed to take effective action and waited instructions from the Admiralty.

- (e) *Admiral North states that he has been awarded the most severe punishment it is possible to award an officer in wartime.*

It is clear, however, that once the Admiralty have lost confidence in a Senior Officer, the only thing they can do is to relieve him from his appointment. If any proof was required that the action taken by the

Admiralty in relieving him from his Command was correct, it is that Admiral North still fails to realise that a war cannot be conducted successfully unless the Senior Officer on the spot takes all essential action in good time. One can have no confidence in an Officer who holds these views.

#### 54. *Admiralty to Flag Officers Home and Abroad*

30 December 1940

A. AT 1728/28/6 is cancelled [1].

B. FOCNA is responsible for preventing passage of the Strait of Gibraltar by all enemy vessels and by vessels of other nations as may be ordered by the Admiralty from time to time.

C. Whilst Force H is based at Gibraltar FOCNA is to call upon SO Force H for such assistance as may be necessary.

Except when directed to carry out specific tasks by the Admiralty the SO Force H is to comply with such tasks so far as he is able but if, owing to conflicting claims, he is unable to do so, the Admiralty should be informed.

D. Force H is available for operations in the Mediterranean as agreed to by Admiralty and as mutually arranged by C-in-C, Mediterranean and FOCNA. It will be lent temporarily to the Mediterranean Station when thus employed.<sup>1</sup>

E. SO Force H remains responsible for the administration of Force H and for its tactical employment during operations whether acting under the strategical control of Admiralty or C-in-C, Mediterranean, or in compliance with the request of FOCNA.

#### 55. *Alexander to John[surname unknown]*

9 August 1953

... Political factors in the situation bore heavily indeed on the military decisions which must be taken.

The Bordeaux Government had let us down badly. ... As we had 'jumped' the *Paris* and *Courbet* in our Ports so could the enemy jump the *Force de Raid* if they thought fit.<sup>2</sup> [Churchill and Alexander] took a poor

<sup>1</sup>C-in-C Med: A/Adm Sir A. Cunningham.

<sup>2</sup>*Paris, Courbet*: Fr battleships, 1911–12, 22,189t, training ships. These ships were seized without loss of life, though casualties occurred in the seizure of other French ships in British ports.

view of Admiral North's attitude on Oran. ... [Churchill was] justly incensed [by the escape of the French ships]. [It was necessary to show the world] we meant business. It was the kind of case where the decision of the Executive was imperative.

... where ... a new commander is required in a particular station it is quite impossible to admit that decision in such a case is subject either to a Court Martial or Court of Inquiry procedure. ...

## 56. *Letter from Admirals of the Fleet*

10 May 1955

1. The decision which Admiral North had to make, viz. whether to interfere with the French Squadron or not, was one for which he as SNO was responsible, though Somerville wished fully to share in it.
2. It was not a decision such as is customary in Naval warfare, based on the traditions of the Service – courage to engage a superior enemy force, energy or any other fighting quality, it was an exceptional decision in Naval history.
3. The Admiralty were in fact trying to force a semi-blockade of Toulon from Whitehall; they had laid down a Policy in July [1940] but that policy was not really utilised in September. North's problem was to determine what the Admiralty wished done in the circumstances. It was a problem of what was politically required of him.
4. If he made any error in judgement, it was at any rate not what could be judged as 'neglect of duty'. Such we feel would be the ordinary naval opinions; nor was it a 'lack of prudent precaution'.
5. It can be said, and has been said, that it was a case where the Admiralty machine broke down and from that failure alone North's problem arose.
6. It seems to us therefore particularly a case which an enquiry as to the cause and responsibility of any failure at Gibraltar was necessary, before judgement was given and punishment meted. *Not only* was his request for an immediate enquiry refused, but his many subsequent requests were similarly denied him.
7. If we may do so with respect, we believe an enquiry by the present Board [of Admiralty] would reflect highly; and would be greatly valued in the Service.

57. *Admiral of the Fleet Lord Chatfield to Prime Minister*

21 May 1957

...

(1) There were two main causes for the failure to stop the French cruisers getting to Casablanca and thence to Dakar.

(a) There was some lack of Admiralty confidence in Admiral North's judgement (or 'outlook') after he wrote the official letter to the Admiralty, saying there was unhappiness in the Fleet about the attack at Oran [2].

(b) As a result of this doubt about North's French mentality, he was not kept informed of the political situation in two respects:—

(i) The change of Admiralty outlook on the French Naval Command.

(ii) The preparation of the Dakar expedition.

Not having full confidence in North it was all the more essential still to keep personal touch. The Admiralty failed to do this – *Whitehall and Gibraltar were miles apart*. On top of this, the Whitehall intelligence machine failed. The vital link – Madrid, Admiralty, Gibraltar – broke down.

(2) It can justly be said (and Lord Fraser said it in the Lords' Debate), 'North should be *relieved from blame for this incident*.'

(3) North could have been relieved at any moment, if the Admiralty thought they had a *better Admiral* for the Gibraltar Command; quite apart from the 'Cruiser' occurrence. That was within the Admiralty right. But in using that right, the Board must *not make a charge* against the Admiral of a serious nature. (As the Board did.) By making a charge, they gave the Admiral the historic right, not only of an Admiral, but of any British Sailor, to defend himself against it. ... North's instructions from the Admiralty were acted upon by him and also by Somerville.

(4) It is quite wrong, as implied by Viscount Alexander in the Lords' Debate, and the Marquess of Salisbury, that the Admiralty have a supreme right to remove an Admiral from his post, also making a charge against him 'of lack of prudent precaution' (or any other 'charge') and to refuse him a trial before his seamen Compeers.<sup>1</sup>

(5) In view of the seriousness of removing an Admiral from his Command in War – not because a better man was available as in the Callaghan-Jellicoe transfer<sup>2</sup> – *but under blame*, it was particularly

<sup>1</sup>The Marquess of Salisbury was a leading and vocal Conservative peer.

<sup>2</sup>Command of the Grand Fleet was transferred from Admiral Sir George Callaghan to Admiral Sir John Jellicoe on 4 August 1914, at the outbreak of the Great War. P. Halpern, *A Naval History of World War I* (London, 1994), p. 23; A. Marder, *From the Dreadnought to Scapa Flow*, I (London, 1961), pp. 433–4.

important to avoid doing so, unless it was a cast iron case. The fact, as the First Sea Lord knew, that the incident for which North was dismissed from his Command occurred from 75% Admiralty and Whitehall default, should have made the First Lord (Alexander) doubly or trebly, careful to do no injustice. In particular, the Admiralty should have taken publicly their 'share of the "muddle"'. They threw all the blame on North and failed to disclose the Admiralty's blame.

(6) The Admiralty may have felt this at the moment. They did nothing about the French ships, said nothing to North. Then came the questions in Parliament about the failure at Dakar.

Instead of acting as they did, it would have been wiser to decide to inform North they had decided to relieve him by Admiral X in say three months. North could have been given another post of less importance. No charge ought to have been made against him.

It was not the removal from his Command, but the words of disgrace attached to the dismissal which North resented and, I think, had the right to resent.

[P.S.] North's letter to the Admiralty (see (1) (a) above) was stupid. He could have sent a personal one to the 1st Sea Lord.

**58.** *The Prime Minister (Mr Harold Macmillan) to Admiral of the Fleet Viscount Cunningham*

23 May 1957

[Enclosing extract from *Hansard: House of Lords Debates*, 23 May 1957, column 1176 – an abridged version of the Prime Minister's statement to the House of Commons on the same day, presented to the Lords by the Earl of Selkirk, First Lord].<sup>1</sup>

...

<sup>1</sup>Earl of Selkirk (1906–94): QC; Group Capt, RAF, 1939–45; Paymaster-General 1953; Chancellor, Duchy of Lancaster 1955; FL 1957–59; High Commissioner, Singapore 1959–63.

The relevant letters from the papers (at the British Library) of Lord Cunningham, one of the signatories of the letter from Admirals of the Fleet and part of the deputation to Macmillan are: Cunningham to Fraser, 9 Jan. 1950, and Fraser to Cunningham, 5 June 1950, both in Add. Mss 52575; and Capt S. W. Roskill to Cunningham, 25 March 1953, Add. Mss. 52563. Cunningham thought North should have displayed more initiative (i.e., ordering *Renown* and destroyers to raise steam and, if necessary, sending them to sea) but thought also that Admiralty orders were vague, that North's conduct did not merit a recall, and that he was unfairly denied a hearing. Fraser, who was First Sea Lord in 1950, had been Third Sea Lord in 1940 and did not feel that he could betray the then-Board's decision.

A careful examination of the records has led me to the conclusion that, so far as concerned the passage of the French ships through the Strait of Gibraltar, Admiral North cannot be accused of any dereliction of duty. He obeyed his orders as he interpreted them and some blame must rest on the fact that they were not drawn up with complete clarity. Nevertheless, in those dangerous days the Admiralty felt that they required at Gibraltar an officer who would not content himself with strict adherence to his orders, but would be likely to show a greater degree of resource and initiative in an emergency.

In my view, a general distinction must be drawn between two things. On the one hand, are definite charges of negligence and the like, reflecting on an officer's honour. Any charge of this kind against Admiral Sir Dudley North could not, in my view, be sustained, and I believe that is generally recognised. On the other hand, the Board of Admiralty have the right and duty to decide on broad grounds whether an officer possesses the qualities necessary for a particular command.

I am satisfied that Admiral North was not the victim of Service or political prejudice. He has nothing with which to reproach himself. He had 44 years of long, distinguished and devoted service in the Royal Navy, and there is no question of his professional integrity being impugned.

In these circumstances, I do not see that anything is to be gained by an inquiry regarding facts that are well documented and undisputed.

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#### *The National Archives, Kew, London*

The Prime Ministerial Papers of Harold Macmillan [TNA, PREM]

Admiralty Papers [TNA, ADM]

#### *The British Library*

The Papers of Admiral of the Fleet Viscount Cunningham (BL Add. Mss. 52576).

*Note:* The editors are grateful to Mr Roderick Suddaby, Keeper of Documents at the Imperial War Museum, who alerted them to the recent deposit of Mr Pawle's papers. Mr Pawle had intended to write a book on the subject. Many of the sources turn up in other collections cited.

They wish to acknowledge also the invaluable help of Rear Admiral J. R. Hill, and of Lieutenant-Commander W. J. R. Gardner of the Naval Historical Branch.

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3. Carter to North	17 July 1940	CAC, AVAR 5/4
4. Admiralty to North	4 July 1940	IWM, Pawle 1
5. North to Admiralty	5 July 1940	IWM, Pawle 1
6. Admiralty to North	6 July 1940	IWM, Pawle 1
7. Admiralty to North	12 July 1940	IWM, Pawle 1
8. Alexander to Churchill	17 July 1940	CAC, AVAR 5/4
9. Churchill to Alexander	20 July 1940	TNA, ADM 1/19177
10. Con. Gen. Tangier to North	9 September 1940	IWM, Pawle 1
11. N. Attaché Madrid to Gibraltar	10 September 1940	IWM, Pawle 1
12. North to Wishart, <i>Hotspur</i>	11 September 1940	IWM, Pawle 1
13. <i>Hotspur</i> to North	11 September 1940	IWM, Pawle 1
14. North to <i>Hotspur</i>	11 September 1940	IWM, Pawle 1
15. North to Wishart, <i>Hotspur</i>	11 September 1940	IWM, Pawle 1
16. North to Admiralty	11 September 1940	IWM, Pawle 1
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36. Carter to Alexander	10 October 1940	TNA, ADM 1/19180
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## XII

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN INDEPENDENT NAVY FOR AUSTRALIA: CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN THE FIRST NAVAL MEMBER AND THE FIRST SEA LORD, 1947–59<sup>1</sup>

*Edited by  
Alastair Cooper*

The relationship between Australia and Britain is a complex one. There are links between all areas of government and society in the two countries, of which the military, diplomatic and economic spheres have received the greatest attention. The relationship is perhaps more endlessly fascinating from an Australian perspective, as Britain was, and in many ways remains, the frame of reference from which Australia has developed its own national character. With the use of hindsight and a further evolved national perspective, Australian historians have in part characterised people and institutions by their differences from their British equivalent, as they sought to identify what was specifically Australian. Such interpretations are unsurprising and, in the main, do not diminish either the historians or their work, but they do leave some people and institutions with simplified, sometimes depreciatory characterisations which are not sustainable from the historical record. One institutional example is the Royal Australian Navy, which has often been described mainly in terms of its links to the Royal Navy and Britain. While deep and abiding links most certainly existed, the tensions and complexities of the relationship that existed are often not appreciated, nor is the context in which events took place; perhaps the result of the often discussed separation between military and other mainstream forms of history. A documentary source that does illustrate the tensions and complexities of the relationship (if not often the broader national context) is the correspondence between the professional heads of the

<sup>1</sup>I am grateful to many people for their assistance and encouragement in preparing this correspondence, particularly the late Mr Anthony Grazebrook for career details of numerous naval officers. I also wish to acknowledge the generous assistance of the Australian War Memorial, which funded part of the initial research.

Royal Australian and Royal Navies, the First Naval Member and the First Sea Lord.<sup>1</sup>

### First Naval Members and Chiefs of Naval Staff

The first Chief of Naval Staff after the Second World War was Admiral Sir Louis Hamilton, RN [1–12]. He was the last British officer loaned to the Australian Navy to be its professional head. Hamilton was well connected in both the RN and the Royal Family, serving twice in the Royal Yacht. He was a ‘salthorse’ (not sub-specialised into gunnery, communications or other warfare disciplines) who, from the end of the First World War to the middle of the Second, commanded four destroyers, three cruisers, the Home Fleet’s destroyers and then the First Cruiser Squadron which was his last seagoing command. As Flag Officer, First Cruiser Squadron, Hamilton commanded the close cover for the convoy PQ17.<sup>2</sup> Subsequently he was the Flag Officer Malta and Central Mediterranean Area. While one of several officers in the Royal Navy with similar backgrounds, in the smaller RAN his considerable operational experience seemed even more impressive.

When he was appointed in September 1945 as First Naval Member and Chief of Naval Staff, Hamilton’s biggest concern during his tenure was the acquisition of new ships of more modern design to replace the obsolescent survivors of the war [1, 2, 4]. This had two aspects: the purchase of light fleet aircraft carriers from Britain [7–12] and the instigation of a destroyer and frigate building programme in Australian shipyards. Neither was an easy task and Hamilton’s success was an indication of his political astuteness. His correspondence with Admiral Sir John Cunningham is indicative of the last vestiges of the British Empire with its corporate imperial views [3, 8]. This does not mean Hamilton failed to serve Australian and RAN interests; the evidence points to the contrary. Several letters show his use of influence with the RN to gain what he believed was the best outcome for the RAN and the British Commonwealth. The carrier acquisition is the best example, for which Hamilton lobbied the

<sup>1</sup>The First Naval Member was also the Chief of Naval Staff, mirroring the RAN’s RN equivalent, the First Sea Lord. As First Naval Member the incumbent was the head of the Australian Commonwealth Naval Board which was corporately responsible for the administration of the RAN. As Chief of Naval Staff the incumbent was individually responsible for the operations of the RAN, though much of this responsibility was delegated to the Flag Officer Commanding the Australian Fleet (FOCAF). See David Stevens (ed.), *The Royal Australian Navy* (Melbourne, 2001), pp. 21 and 59, and Robert Hyslop, *Aye Aye, Minister: Australian Naval Administration 1939–59* (Canberra, 1991), pp. 49–68 *passim*.

<sup>2</sup>For an account of PQ17 and Hamilton’s involvement see Correlli Barnett, *Engage the Enemy More Closely. The Royal Navy in the Second World War* (London, 1991), pp. 712–22.

RN and the British Government to allay Australian Government suspicions over potential cost increases and the longer term utility of the carriers themselves [9, 12].<sup>1</sup> The correspondence does illustrate the tensions that existed between corporate imperial interests and the emergent, singularly Australian, national interest [10].

In February 1948 Hamilton was succeeded by then Rear Admiral John Collins, RAN. He was the first Chief of Naval Staff to have graduated from the Royal Australian Naval College and the second RAN officer to be the First Naval Member and Chief of Naval Staff; Admiral Sir G. Francis Hyde having been the first from 1931 to 1937. Collins was very well known in Australia, having commanded HMAS *Sydney* during her successful engagement and sinking of the Italian cruiser *Bartolomeo Colleoni* in 1940 in the Mediterranean. Subsequently he served as Assistant Chief of Staff to the Commander-in-Chief China during the period of furious Japanese advances through Southeast Asia, the Commanding Officer of HMAS *Shropshire* and Commodore Commanding the Australian Squadron. In the last of these appointments he was also Commander, Task Group 74, a combined USN/RAN task group.

Despite being an RAN officer, Collins had served with and in the RN at many stages throughout his career and was a very good example of Pearce's 'Navy within a Navy'.<sup>2</sup> One question that arises is what difference it made appointing him instead of another RN loan officer, as Hamilton and to some extent Collins himself preferred [4]. At one level it satisfied the political need for an Australian to be the professional head of the RAN. Though this principle was actively implemented by the then Labour Federal Government in Australia, Liberal and Labour government pursued a policy with both principled and pragmatic elements. Collins' appointment as First Naval Member and CNS was a matter of principle, but two further RN officers served on loan as Flag Officer Commanding the Australian Fleet, recognition that the RAN did not have enough experienced officers to fill all its senior positions.

The appointment of an RAN officer had the potential to significantly change the RAN. For example, it could have been argued (and was by Hamilton) to be premature in that neither Collins nor the few other prospective RAN candidates had sufficient administrative and political experience. Most RAN officers' experience was of operational matters,

<sup>1</sup>The acquisition of the RAN's carriers is a subject in itself. See James Goldrick, 'Carriers for the Commonwealth', in T. R. Frame, J. V. P. Goldrick and P. D. Jones (eds), *Reflections on The Royal Australian Navy* (Sydney, 1991).

<sup>2</sup>Senator George Pearce was the Australian Defence Minister (1910–13, 1914–21). He described the RAN on its creation as 'a navy within a navy, a logical outcome for a nation within a nation'. Jeffrey Grey, *A Military History of Australia* (Melbourne, 1999), pp. 72–3.

their administrative understanding being limited by the small size of the Australian Commonwealth Naval Board (ACNB) and its dependence on the Admiralty for many functions. However, the appointment of an RAN officer was certainly more appropriate than it had been in the late 1930s, when the idea had first been raised, and also more timely than in the later stages of the war (when Collins was first considered and Hamilton eventually appointed). If it was premature, it was because of the inadequate number of candidates from which to choose, a consequence of war losses from a small professional RAN officer corps (for example, Captains H. M. L. Waller and E. Dechaineaux, Commanding Officers of HMA Ships *Perth* and *Australia* respectively). Collins proved to be a very capable First Naval Member, but there were no other candidates and even only a small number of potential successors. Although a delay of another two to three years might have gained some experience for Collins and future candidates, it was not something that could have been remedied within a politically acceptable time frame. In practice, the close links with the RN and Admiralty meant that the professional heads of the RAN were able to gain experience in the job without being bereft of advice in unfamiliar situations.

Collins was appointed specifically as the best qualified RAN officer for the job. This may not have had a revolutionary effect, but he did have a more overtly Australian attitude to some matters, such as strategic planning, equipment acquisition and relations with the USN, with the caveat that he had more opportunity in these areas than had Hamilton. Nevertheless, it is difficult to imagine an RN officer raising the prospect of the Australian Navy buying second-hand USN destroyers, as Collins did in 1951 [36]. The correspondence illustrates the start of the RAN maturing into an independent service, mirroring the national relationship between Australia and Great Britain. In addition the appointment of an RAN First Naval Member probably had an effect on the RAN as a whole. The sight of Collins, an RAN Rear Admiral, taking over from Hamilton, an RN Admiral, was a very strong symbolic statement.

John Collins served for one day short of eight years, the second longest serving Australian Chief of Naval Staff, and corresponded with three successive First Sea Lords: Admirals Sir John Cunningham [13, 14], Lord Fraser [15–44] and Sir Rhoderick McGrigor [45–72]. It was a tumultuous period for both Navies, which is reflected in the letters. These discuss personnel shortages, the protracted Australian carrier acquisition, the Korean War, RAN finances, dockyards and ship building programmes, ANZAM and Collins' operational agreements with successive US Pacific Commanders-in-Chief, the Ramsey–Collins and Radford–Collins agreements [19, 35]. Collins' future as a naval officer is also mentioned;

because Collins was promoted early he reached his notional retiring age before normal. He hoped that he would be able to continue his career on exchange with the Royal Navy, but this was not approved by the Australian Government [60–64].

Collins was succeeded by Rear Admiral Roy Dowling in 1955. As with Collins, Dowling's career was principally as a seagoing officer or closely related operational positions. During the Second World War, Dowling was the Executive Officer of the cruiser HMS *Naiad*, the RAN's Director of Plans and Assistant Chief of Naval Staff, and then Commanding Officer of the cruiser HMAS *Hobart*. Dowling's promotion to the highest levels of the RAN was accelerated by wartime casualties and the poor health of officers senior to him. This was evident in his selection to commission and command the RAN's first carrier, HMAS *Sydney*, in 1948 and then in his appointment as Second Naval Member in 1951 [49, 65].<sup>1</sup> Prior to becoming First Naval Member Dowling was the Flag Officer Commanding the Australian Fleet (FOCAF).

Dowling's period as Chief of Naval Staff was a difficult one. The RAN was struggling to complete its post-war building programme at a time when all three services were competing for funding for the next major round of equipment acquisition. In particular, Dowling had to defend Australia's need for an aircraft carrier. Additionally there was Australia's commitment to the Far East Strategic Reserve, which was a large task for the RAN [92], falling recruiting and re-engagement rates and service pay [89]. All of these issues receive mention in Dowling's correspondence with Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten, who became First Sea Lord at approximately the same time Dowling took over as First Naval Member. It is, however, surprising that two of the main subjects of discussion between them were honours and awards for senior naval officers and the rank of the First Naval Member [74, 80, 82, 84, 85, 91]. In both areas Dowling felt that he was being slighted and, through him, the Navy in general. Dowling also discussed the conduct of several naval exercises that were carried out during his tenure [86, 89].

The correspondence between Dowling and Mountbatten has a very different tone to the rest of the series. Dowling adopts a distinctly subordinate role to Mountbatten, seeking detailed guidance [74, 76, 77]. In part this reflects the relative size and capabilities of the Admiralty and ACNB, but also reflects strongly on the individual personalities of Mountbatten and Dowling. Mountbatten used at least one generic letter, sent to all of the Commonwealth Navy Chiefs [75].

<sup>1</sup>See Dowling entry in John Ritchie (ed.), *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Vol. 14 1940–1980 (Melbourne, 1996), pp. 24–7.

The question of whether and how to replace the carrier *Melbourne* was not resolved during Dowling's tenure. Vice Admiral Sir Henry Burrell, who succeeded Dowling as First Naval Member in February 1959, continued to argue for the retention of the Fleet Air Arm [93–97]. The final portion of the correspondence is between Admiral Sir Charles Lambe, Mountbatten's successor as First Sea Lord, and Burrell. It shows Burrell's and Lambe's attempts to reconcile British strategic interests and Australian financial reality [95], attempts which were at that point unsuccessful; the Minister for Defence, Athol Townley, announced later in 1959 that *Melbourne* would decommission in 1963 with no replacement.

Although there is comparatively little correspondence between Burrell and Lambe, its business-like tone is very different to that between Dowling and Mountbatten. In one letter not found in the records, Lambe seems to apologise for having conducted an Admiralty study into the RAN's future needs [97]. This would have been previously unlikely, and is one sign that other countries' naval officers, as well as Australian politicians, regarded the RAN as an independent service.

### Notes on the Correspondence

The original documents are located in The National Archive, Kew, principally in the ADM 205 series, First Sea Lords correspondence files. The documents do not appear to have survived in Australia, probably being retained or destroyed by individual First Naval Members or their staffs. The correspondence covers the period 1947 to 1959, during which both navies established the basic tenets of their post-world war activities, of which large elements remain evident over 40 years later. It almost certainly existed prior to this period, though whether it took precisely the same form is not known. Subsequently, although the service chiefs maintained at least informal contacts developed through meetings at professional courses through their careers, it appears that the written correspondence gradually petered out; certainly the semi-official and personal nature of it diminished, leaving on the record more formal and official inter-government communication. Nevertheless, what remains is one of the richest seams of information in RAN history, as the whole ADM 205 series must be for the RN.

The selection of correspondence has been annotated in an attempt to make it more easily accessible without detailed knowledge of naval history, personalities or technical matters – a small step in allowing readers to appreciate the detail of the relationship that existed and then to set it in a broader context. In general it is in chronological order, with some minor changes to allow for a logical flow, given delays in mail and

some letters crossing each other in the post. In some instances the correspondence had hand-written annotations; where these add significantly to the correspondence they have been included and marked as such.

## Abbreviations

AA	Anti-Aircraft
ABC	Atomic, Biological and Chemical – predecessor to the current NBC
ACNB	Australian Commonwealth Naval Board
AD	Aircraft Direction
AFO	Admiralty Fleet Order
AJASS	Australian Joint Anti-Submarine School
AMS	Australian Minesweepers or <i>Bathurst</i> class corvettes
ANRUK	Australian Naval Representative to the UK
ANZAM	Australia, New Zealand and Malaya – a defence agreement between Australia, Great Britain and New Zealand for the planning and conduct of the defence of the ANZAM area.
ANZUS	Australia, New Zealand and United States defence treaty
AS or A/S	Anti-Submarine
AVGAS	Aviation Gasoline
CAFO	Confidential Admiralty Fleet Order
CAS	Chief of Air Staff (UK and Australia)
CAG	Carrier Air Group
CB	Companion of the (Military) Order of the Bath
CBE	Commander of the Order of the British Empire
CGS	Chief of General Staff (Australia)
CIGS	Chief of the Imperial General Staff (UK)
C-in-C EI(s)	Commander-in-Chief, East Indies
CMS	Coastal Minesweepers
CNS	Chief of Naval Staff (UK and Australia)
CNO	Chief of Naval Operations (USA)
CO	CO class destroyers, the names for which all start with the letters CO.
COS(s)	Chief(s) of Staff
CVL	Light Aircraft Carrier
D of P	Director of Plans
DCNS	Deputy Chief of Naval Staff
DD	Destroyer
DNOUW	Destroyer Director of Naval Ordnance and Underwater Weapons

FAA	Fleet Air Arm (UK and Australia)
FES	Far East Station, the Royal Navy area command in the Pacific, East and Southeast Asia
FF	Frigate
FO	Flag Officer
FOCAF	Flag Officer Commanding the Australian Fleet
FOICEA	Flag Officer in Command Eastern Australia
GPV	General Purpose Vessel
GW	Guided Weapon
HA LA	High Angle, Low Angle – refers to a gun mounting and fore control system with both anti-aircraft (high angle) and anti-surface (low angles) capabilities.
HDML	Harbour Defence Motor Launch
IDC	Imperial Defence College
IMS	Inshore Minesweepers
JPS	Joint Planning Staff
KBE	Knight Commander of the Order of the British Empire
KCB	Knight Commander of the (Military) Order of the Bath
KR & AI	King's Regulations and Admiralty Instructions
LCT	Landing Craft Tank
LSI	Landing Ship Infantry
LST	Landing Ship Tank
MBE	Member of the Order of the British Empire
MDG	Medical Director General
M/S	Minesweeping
NAA	National Archives of Australia
NARA	United States National Archives and Records Administration
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NBC	Nuclear, Biological and Chemical
NLO	Naval Liaison Officer
NODECO	No decode
NOIC	Naval Officer in Charge
NST	National Service Training
OBE	Officer of the Order of the British Empire
Q's	Q class destroyers, subsequently converted to frigates, the names for which all start with the letter Q.
QR and AI	Queen's Regulations and Admiralty Instructions
RAN	Royal Australian Navy
RANR	Royal Australian Navy Reserve
RANLO	RAN Liaison Officer
RATOG	Rocket Assisted Take Off Gear

RN	Royal Navy
RNZN	Royal New Zealand Navy
SACLANT	Supreme Allied Commander, Atlantic
SAGW	Surface to Air Guided Weapon(s)
SEACDT	South East Asian Collective Defence Treaty or Manila Treaty
SEATO	South East Asian Treaty Organisation
SLS	Service Liaison Staff
SOTC	probably Senior Officer Training Course
UKSLS	United Kingdom Service Liaison Staff
UKCOS	United Kingdom Chiefs of Staff
USJCOS	United States Joint Chiefs of Staff
USN	United States Navy
VCNS	Vice Chief of Naval Staff (UK)
VTOL	Vertical Take-off and Landing

## Part 1

### Hamilton and J. D. Cunningham<sup>1</sup>

#### 1. *Hamilton to Cunningham*

3 February 1947

Since I last wrote this country has been mainly interested in holidays, Test Matches and strikes, so little progress has been made in Service matters. However, there are a few points which may be of interest.

New Minister Of The Navy.

My new Minister, Riordan,<sup>2</sup> is turning out even better than I had hoped, he is mad keen to learn and genuinely interested in the Navy. He is consequently horrified at the present state of the RAN both from the manning and material point of view. He quite realises that with the present ships the RAN, is a moribund force incapable of taking its place in an Empire Fleet or operating as an independent unit under modern

<sup>1</sup>The correspondence between the RAN 1st Naval Member and the RN 1st Sea Lord has been drawn almost exclusively from ADM 205, 1st Sea Lord's Correspondence in the Admiralty File Series at the The National Archives (TNA), Kew, London.

<sup>2</sup>The Hon. W. J. F. Riordan, Minister for the Navy 1946–49.

conditions. I have also made it clear that if Cabinet agree to Naval Aviation and modernising the Fleet it will take 5 to 10 years for the RAN to build up to the required state of efficiency. The manning situation is equally perturbing, as we are still tied to the 1939 figure of 6300 officers and men. I have pointed out that officers are the key to the problem, and that at the end of this year we shall be between 40% and 50% short of establishment on the foreseeable naval commitments, and also that it takes 7 to 8 years to produce officers and that they can not all be entered at the same time.

He has hoisted in all the salient points, and keeps on reiterating that until he took over the Navy his knowledge was that of the man in the street, and that other Ministers were equally ignorant. He is now toying with the idea of circularising the Cabinet on the serious position of the Navy, for which I have prepared him a simple non-technical brief. This includes some general remarks on atomic weapons, as Professor Oliphant recently apparently convinced a good many of the Cabinet that the Atomic bomb had finished Navies!<sup>1</sup>

#### Post-War Forces.

I think I told you the RAN post-war plan based on minimum requirements by 1960 was completed in October 1945 and has not been altered since. In spite of all my efforts during the last 18 months it only reached the Defence Committee a month ago. The three Service plans have now gone to the Minister of Defence, then to the Council of Defence, and presumably in the dim future to the Cabinet. The estimates involved are in the following ratio – Army 6, Navy 5, and Air 5. There was a hell of a wrangle lasting days when I pointed out that it was fantastic for Australia situated in the strategic blue of the Pacific to spend more on her Army than on her Navy. Eventually I insisted on my views being incorporated in the final paper, as the Army would not budge. This is the type of impasse I have always visualised in this country as a result of the glib phrase ‘Integration of the Services’. In fact it works out here as a glorious excuse for the Army and Air to grab money off the Navy!

<sup>1</sup>Prof. Marcus E. L. Oliphant was an Australian physicist who was involved in the development of the atomic bomb during World War II (the Manhattan Project). He became a ‘belligerent pacifist’ after the atomic bomb attacks on Japan. See Graeme Davison, John Hirst and Stuart MacIntyre, *The Oxford Companion to Australian History* (Melbourne, 1998), pp. 478–9.

NA 1 SL<sup>1</sup>

I have had recent very frank talks, on separate occasions, with both Shedden<sup>2</sup> and Riordan concerning your offer to Collins. Incidentally I must apologise for the misprint in my letter in which I referred to the appointment as Assistant 1SL.

I made it quite clear to Shedden and Riordan that much as I admired Collins as a sea officer I was quite certain he had neither the background or experience to build up a modern Navy from scratch. I stressed that your offer not only recognised that the RAN had come to maturity (the Australia for Australians argument) but he could not get the experience in any other way. I further pointed out we were living in an era of new weapons which would inevitably affect strategy, tactics, and administration, consequently the officer who took over 1st NM should be mentally equipped to the best advantage. I also stated quite definitely that I wished to be relieved on the expiration of my 2 years' contract, which would entail another RN officer as 1st NM. In this respect if it were possible to make an officer available, who was known to the Australians, there would be more chance of acceptance – I had Wilfred Patterson in mind.<sup>3</sup>

I hope to get a decision on Collins this month, as I pointed out my time was up in July and that Admiralty required some months warning in order to produce a relief in time.

I am afraid the appointment of McKell as Governor-General is hardly a good omen, and I am not particularly hopeful that the future efficiency of the RAN will weigh sufficiently against the desire of the wild men in the Cabinet to put in an Australian, and to a less extent, Shedden and the other COS's to get rid of an independent minded RN officer as 1st NM<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Naval Assistant to the 1st Sea Lord. This was a position within the Admiralty organisation in Britain, which would have given the then Rear Admiral Collins experience in high level administration of a Navy, something thought to be desirable before he became the professional head of the RAN.

<sup>2</sup>Sir Frederick Shedden, Secretary of the Department of Defence, 1937–56. Shedden attempted but never completed a history of his service. The research material he gathered is held by the National Archives of Australia in Canberra; A5954. See also David Horner, *Defence Supremo. Sir Frederick Shedden and the making of Australian Defence Policy*, (Sydney, 2000).

<sup>3</sup>Capt (later Adm Sir) Wilfred Patterson commanded HMAS *Canberra*, 1938–40 and was the Commodore Commanding the Australian Squadron in 1939.

<sup>4</sup>Sir William John McKell (1891–1985) was a Labour politician from New South Wales (NSW) and the serving State Premier when he was appointed as Governor-General (11 Mar. 1947–2 Sept. 1952) by the Labour Prime Minister, Ben Chifley, also from NSW. The appointment was very controversial at the time. It was an example of the then long-running theme in Australian public life to have Australian citizens, preferably born in Australia, appointed to the most senior positions of power in Australia. The Australian Labour Party generally took the lead in this matter, although the practice of appointing Australians to such positions was continued by politicians from the conservative parties.

Jack Tovey was in excellent form, and I think they both enjoyed their run round in Australia, and he did some excellent work in publicising the Navy and Sea Power.<sup>1</sup> Outside a few senior officers in Army and Air, I have not met one man in Australia who had ever heard the name of Tovey, much less of his services. May I suggest that when senior officers are visiting any of the Dominions unofficially that Admiralty inform the Naval Authorities concerned, as it gives the latter a starting point. As the housing problem is as acute here as elsewhere, I can state quite definitely that unless I had got a private note from him, the Toveys would have had nowhere to lay their heads and no facilities. At this end one feels strongly the importance of Senior Naval Officers being recognised in the same manner as officers of the other two Services. Speaking for Australia, the people and the press are always eager to welcome distinguished strangers which makes it impossible for them to get away with a purely private visit.

## 2. *Hamilton to Cunningham*

18 March 1947

I returned recently from Canberra, having attended the installation of Mr McKell as Governor-General, and then a meeting of the Council of Defence.<sup>2</sup>

The latter I can only describe as shattering. The Prime Minister opened the proceedings and spoke on Australia's contribution to Imperial Defence being mainly on the research and development of new weapons and what a lot of money the country was going to spend on these and other activities such as Defence Department, Intelligence, Munitions, etc.<sup>3</sup> The total vote for Defence would be 50 millions, and when the above requirements had absorbed all the money they required the residue could be divided equally among the three services.

I had my say, strongly supported by Riordan, Minister for the Navy. I pointed out the position of Australia with thousands of miles of sea-communications and that the basic foundation of her Defence problem was the protection of the merchant ship. I stressed the fact that the main units of the fleet were 3 old cruisers approaching the scrapping age, and the Royal Australian Navy was incapable under modern conditions of

<sup>1</sup>Admiral Sir John Tovey, RN, C-in-C Home Fleet 1941-43 and later C-in-C The Nore.

<sup>2</sup>The Council of Defence was created in 1904 to be the final authority for consideration and direction of Australian Defence Policy. See Jeffrey Grey, *A Military History of Australia* (Melbourne, 1990), pp. 69-70.

<sup>3</sup>The Rt Hon J. B. (Ben) Chifley, Prime Minister 1945-49.

operating as an independent force owing to lack of Naval aviation.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, individual ships were insufficiently trained in such important activities as Fighter Direction and A/A Gunnery to take their place in an Empire or Allied Fleet.

I outlined the requirements of a modern Post-War Navy to be built up from scratch including Aircraft Carriers, Cruisers and Destroyers. Then emphasised the seriousness of the manning situation and the vital necessity for a 'Bid on account', as whatever type of ships were decided upon highly trained officers and men were a necessity.

Nothing that my Minister or I said made the slightest impression.

Chief of Air Staff then gave a typical detailed nuts-and bolts exposition of the Air Force plans, in which he included a somewhat half-hearted support of Aircraft Carriers, who would probably be of use for a few years. To my surprise he then launched out into a diatribe on the iniquities of two Air Forces, the duplication and extravagance of two training set-ups, and that Royal Australian Air Force would man the Carriers under Naval operational control.

I told the Prime Minister that I regretted CAS attempting to pre-judge the case as the Government had approved of an expensive team of experts from the Admiralty to go into this very question. These experts had now completed a very thorough and able report on the subject and were awaiting the RAAF report, which was not ready, before getting down to an inter-service examination of the problem in accordance with Government instructions.

CAS interposed that his report was ready and that he had been waiting for the Navy. This was not true, but I felt there was no point in pursuing the matter further.

CAS then went on to describe all the RAAF activities concerning the Guided Weapon Range (the apple of the Government's eye).<sup>2</sup> I found subsequently on talking to Lieutenant General Evetts that CAS statements were to put it mildly exaggerated.<sup>3</sup> Certain questions connected with these experiments form the subject of a separate letter.

Chief of General Staff did not get much of a hearing as the Prime Minister interrupted him to say that the basis of his scheme was compulsory training, which was unlikely to be approved by Cabinet. The

<sup>1</sup>In 1947 the RAN's largest warships (and years of launch) were the cruisers *Australia* (1927), *Shropshire* (1928) and *Hobart* (1934).

<sup>2</sup>The Long Range Weapons Establishment was a joint Anglo-Australian project established in 1946. It consisted of a weapons testing range at Woomera in South Australia and a research and development centre in Salisbury, Adelaide. See Peter Morton, *Fire Across the Desert: Woomera and the Anglo-Australian Joint Project 1946–1980* (Canberra, 1989).

<sup>3</sup>Lt Gen J. F. Evetts was the Chief Executive Officer of the Long Range Weapons Organisation, Australia, which was part of the British Ministry of Supply.

Prime Minister enlarged on the subject of the Army on the familiar lines that new weapons would achieve the victory and soldiers would only be required for mopping up and occupation duties.

After some two hours discussion Shedden produced a paper, copy of which was handed round to each Minister and Chief of Staff, which in effect elaborated on paper the Prime Minister's opening remarks, and enjoined the Chiefs of Staff to go away and produce new plans for Post War Forces based on 10–12 million for each service.

Although Minister of Navy pressed again for a 'Bid on Account' this was refused. So as far as the Royal Australian Navy are concerned we have not advanced in any way since Royle left, except for a limited destroyer building programme.<sup>1</sup>

There are several somewhat perturbing features which come out of this Meeting –

- (1) That in accordance with Labour Government practice in this country the whole question of Post War Defence was settled before the Chiefs of Staff were called in. This is the logical result of Shedden's 'Higher Defence Machinery' in which he has now succeeded in severing all direct contact between the Chiefs of Staff and members of the Government.
- (2) Shedden is basically sound on Defence problems, but as he has eliminated all direct professional advice and canalised every Defence question into his own hands, not only is the machine grinding extremely slowly; but when it comes to presentation of any particular problem to Cabinet, Shedden is merely a civilian and is forced to give way on the score of political expediency.
- (3) Largely owing to this cry for 'Integration of the Services' the fantastic situation has arisen in which the Government entirely fail to appreciate the vital importance of their sea communications. Hence the equal division of the residue of the money amongst the three services.

The Army in particular are laying great store by the visit of Chief of Imperial General Staff in July. If the Field Marshal thinks he can do anything towards altering this Government's view on conscription I am convinced he would be wasting his time. That being the case he would also be wasting his time going deeply, except from an academic point of

<sup>1</sup>Adm Sir Guy Royle, RN, 1st Naval Member and Chief of Naval Staff, 1941–45. Royal Navy officers do not normally use RN as a post-nominal, however it has been used here and throughout to distinguish them from their RAN counterparts. The destroyer-building programme was to build two Battle class destroyers, *Tobruk* and *Anzac*.

view, into training and tactics; because by that time there will be no troops except the occupation force in Japan. On the other hand he might carry weight from the Imperial Defence point of view if he, as a soldier, were to stress the vital necessity of keeping open the communications and emphasise the necessity for a modern Navy.

The more I see of the ministerial mind in this country the more convinced I am they do not begin to understand the Defence problem. Few of the Cabinet have been in any of the services and consequently have no personal experience of Navy, also few have ever been outside Australia and consequently have no conception of how modern War touches every man, woman and child; this lack of appreciation is further emphasised by the fact that Australia was virtually untouched by the late War. I presume this latter factor is equally applicable in the other Dominions.

This Government is pinning its faith to new weapons and largely looks on its contribution to Empire Defence as being the Guided Weapons Range and the 'Higher Defence Machinery' organisation, and regard this as implementing their promises at the Prime Ministers' Conference in 1946. The logical argument then follows that a small population can not do everything, so if they are involved in War in the future such old fashioned forces as the Navy will be catered for by the Royal Navy and United States Navy, assuming the unlikely event that a modern Navy will be required at all!

I would request that you do not quote me as your informant outside the Admiralty. Incidentally a pretty accurate report of the meeting appeared in the Press the following day, although in my presence the Prime Minister stated that no information was to be issued to the Press. Captain (S) Foley is fully acquainted with my views as set out above.<sup>1</sup>

### 3. *Cunningham to Hamilton*

30 May 1947

I am afraid that several of your letters have remained unanswered for too long, but I was anxious before replying to get the background from every direction, including Collins himself. I have had several talks with him, and he confirms to the full your impression that it would be quite useless to press the authorities at your end any further to accept an RN relief for you. Under these circumstances, Collins feels, and after talking to him I

<sup>1</sup>Capt (S) J. B. Foley, RAN, Secretary to the 1st Naval Member 1931–44, RAN Liaison Officer London 1944–55.

agree, that the only effect of asking that Collins' relief of you should be deferred would be that Moore would be appointed temporarily, and that one of the first actions which Moore would take would be to ensure that his temporary appointment, and his acting rank, were made permanent.<sup>1</sup> We would therefore be faced with the possibility, amounting indeed to a probability, that we should be saddled with Moore as First Naval Member for anything up to the next 7 years. Under these circumstances, it seems to me that the only thing to do is to accept Collins' lack of Admiralty experience and plan on the basis that he will relieve you on the termination of his IDC course.<sup>2</sup> I would, therefore, be extremely grateful if you would agree to the extension of your appointment until Collins returns.

2. With reference to the visit of the CIGS,<sup>3</sup> you should know, for your own very personal information, that he attempted to get the Chiefs of Staff Committee to agree to a brief which would have authorised him to cover the whole range of strategic questions during his visit to Australia. Neither CAS nor I would agree to this, and we have impressed upon him that he is *NOT* going round the world as a representative of the Chiefs of Staff, but merely as a military officer in a semi-private capacity, and that what advice he may choose to offer in regard to Dominion armies is a matter purely for himself, and in no way commits the Chiefs of Staff to anything which he may put forward. I am sure that you will very quickly come to the conclusion that it would be useless to ask him 'to stress the vital necessity of keeping open the communications and emphasise the necessity for a modern navy', as you suggest in your letter.

#### 4. *Hamilton to Cunningham*

17 June 1947

Very many thanks for your letter (Ref.X.47/2) of 30th May. I will of course remain here as long as you think it desirable, and, as I explain later in this letter, I am much happier in that respect than when I wrote my letters of 18th and 19th March. I am grateful for your indication of the form to expect regarding the visit of the Chief of the Imperial General Staff.

<sup>1</sup>Acting RA George D. Moore was FOICEA 1944–50. He was given the honorary rank of Rear Admiral on retirement from the RAN after which he became Australian Ambassador to the Philippines 1950–55.

<sup>2</sup>IDC – Imperial Defence College. A senior staff course attended by service and some civilian personnel from around the Commonwealth.

<sup>3</sup>Field Marshal Montgomery, Chief of the Imperial General Staff, 1946–48.

I enclose my copy of the statement made by the Minister of Defence<sup>1</sup> to Parliament on 4th June on Australian Post-War Defence Policy. I think you will agree that it is a masterly exposition made out by Shedden, and that he deserves great credit for it.

I will endeavour to give you the background of the changes in the Government Defence outlook during the last three months, which have led up to the relatively satisfactory solution arrived at.

In the first place I made it quite clear to the Prime Minister, Shedden, my own Minister, and the Defence Committee how shattered I was at the conclusion arrived at by the March meeting of the Council of Defence, which broadly amounted to £12½ million for each Service for the coming financial year only, and reliance in the future on 'Press-the-button' warfare.

I tried to work out a Post-War Naval plan on the above basis, but of course found it quite impossible. So, after endless discussions with the Naval staff, decided to stick to the original long term Naval plan for 1960, cut out certain future capital expenditure temporarily, such as replacement of cruisers and provision of Fleet Train, and present a 5-year plan based on absolute minimum requirements if the RAN was to be a modern force. This worked out to £15¾ millions a year. In addition, and as a preamble to the logical scaling down of the 1960 plan, I wrote a 'Child's Guide' on Australian Naval Defence for the benefit of the politicians. This was worth while as many of the arguments are quoted in the Minister's Statement. Incidentally I hope that the 1960 plan as it now stands will be a Bible for my successors to quote from and work on. I have sent a copy to Captain (S) Foley in case any one at the Admiralty wishes to see it. I would ask that its circulation be restricted for the time being owing to the extreme suspicion with which my direct communication with Admiralty is regarded.<sup>2</sup>

Viewing the Minister of Defence's statement as a whole, I hope I am not exaggerating when I conclude:—

- a) It is the first concrete evidence that the British Empire is not going to disintegrate as a world power, and, taken in conjunction with

<sup>1</sup>The Hon. John Dedman was the Minister for Defence 1946–49 and Minister for Postwar Reconstruction 1945–49.

<sup>2</sup>The Australian Government did not view the direct communication between the RAN and RN on matters of government policy with much favour, a view at least encouraged by and probably originating from Sir Frederick Shedden, the Head of the Defence Department. For one example see letter, Hamilton to Capt Bernard Foley (RAN Liaison Officer – London), 4 October 1946, Foley Papers. Copies of the Foley papers are held by the NAA (Canberra), and a selection have been published by the Naval Historical Society; J. V. P. Goldrick, 'Selections from the Memoirs and Correspondence of Captain James Bernard Foley, CBE, RAN (1876–1974)', *The Naval Miscellany*, vol. 5, NRS (London, 1984).

Smuts' speeches after the Royal Tour, is an excellent omen for the future.<sup>1</sup>

- b) It means that Australia, for the first time in her history, is going to take a real share in Imperial Defence on a planned basis.
- c) To the best of my knowledge it is the first time in history that a democratic Government has committed itself to a 5-year over-all Defence Programme.

There is no doubt the credit for the 5-year programme goes to Shedden, who being very sound on Defence matters has always recognised the necessity for long term planning. You will be amused to hear that our personal relationship in the last three months has advanced through the successive stages of 'armed neutrality', 'co-belligerency' to that of 'allies', where we now scratch one another's backs! The only credit I take is for not having a blazing row with him in the past, as it is not easy to put up with being treated as the Office Boy over a prolonged period. However, having been shorn of a great deal of his power he has now seen the light and will I think in future work in much more with the Chiefs of Staff. In this respect, I am sure you will agree that all men are susceptible to flattery, and I suggest for your consideration you writing personally to Shedden and congratulating him on the masterly exposition by the Minister of Defence which you have read with interest. I suggest this with an eye to the future as a personal contact with Shedden may produce further dividends for the RAN as the latter is a disciple of Richmond.<sup>2</sup> Moreover, when Collins takes over he will require all the support he can get in the administrative problems of naval aviation and the goodwill of Shedden will be invaluable.

The question of whether RAAF or RAN man the Carriers is deferred until early in July. Although I am leaving no stone unturned, I have not much fear of the result, as Anstice has produced a masterly report on the joint RAAF-RAN, staff discussions, which brings out all the overwhelming advantages.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Field Marshal J. C. Smuts (1870–1950) was the elder statesman of the Commonwealth after the Second World War. His long contribution to South African, Commonwealth/Empire and world affairs included the drafting of the United Nations Covenant, terms as Prime Minister of South Africa, leading roles in Allied strategy in both world wars, contributions to the League of Nations and active participation as a Boer leader during the Boer War.

<sup>2</sup>Adm Sir Herbert Richmond, RN. Richmond was a career naval officer, historian, strategist and co-founder of *The Naval Review*. See Barry Hunt, *Sailor-Scholar: Admiral Sir Herbert Richmond 1871–1946* (Waterloo, Ontario, 1982). Richmond was the President of the Imperial Defence College when Shedden attended in 1928. Shedden was very impressed by Richmond and subsequently remained in contact with him.

<sup>3</sup>Cdre (later Adm Sir) E. W. Anstice, RN was the 4th Naval Member of the ACNB and Chief of the FAA, 1946–48. On return to the RN he served as FO Flying Training and 5th Sea Lord (equivalent to the RAN 4th Naval Member).

The only other item which may interest you is the visit to Australia of Admiral Denfeld, Commander-in-Chief, Pacific and Pacific Fleet.<sup>1</sup> During his 36 hours in Melbourne he came and had a long yarn with me and was most forthcoming. He was frank about Manus and said he was glad Dr. Evatt had overcalled his hand on the original US offer to share facilities, as with the present cutting down of US Navy commitments he would have found it most embarrassing to man Manus.<sup>2</sup> He offered to send officers down here every six months if desired to discuss plans for Pacific Defence with our Defence Committee, as long as they were on a purely Service level. Both Shedden and I think this would be valuable. If and when these staff discussions eventuate, would you like me to inform Commander-in-Chief, British Pacific Fleet, so that he can send a representative if he so desires?

### 5. *Signal, Admiralty to Naval Board*<sup>3</sup>

2 July 1947

021039B July

Personal for Admiral Hamilton

Following Personal from 1st Sea Lord

1. The provisional approval of the Australian Government for two Light Fleet Carriers is very gratifying.<sup>4</sup>
2. I am delighted that your unremitting efforts to persuade Australia to form a Naval Air Arm have been met with such success.

<sup>1</sup>Adm Louis E. Denfield, USN, Chief of Naval Operations 1947–49.

<sup>2</sup>The Rt Hon Dr H. V. Evatt, Minister for External Affairs, 1941–49. Manus is an island in the Admiralty Islands, north of New Guinea, which was used by the US and Royal Navies as an intermediate base during World War II. After the war the US considered using it as a permanent base, a proposition which required Australian Government approval as it was part of Australian New Guinea. See Alan Watt, *The Evolution of Australian Foreign Policy, 1938–1965* (London, 1967), pp. 100–102.

<sup>3</sup>Australian Commonwealth Naval Board (ACNB).

<sup>4</sup>See Anthony Wright, *Australian Carrier Decisions. The acquisition of HMA Ships Albatross, Sydney and Melbourne* (Canberra, 1996).

6. *Hamilton to Cunningham*

11 July 1947

I enclose an account of the meeting of the Council of Defence on the 3rd July on the question of manning Naval Aviation. The Prime Minister was briefed by Shedden, and amongst other things I gave the latter a copy of the Evershed report to read on the understanding that it was not referred to or quoted officially.<sup>1</sup> The meeting went better than I ever anticipated, and afterwards Dr. Evatt said to me, 'I thought you were a bit hard on Jones (Chief of Air Staff), as you reminded me of a prosecuting counsel asking in a cold blooded manner for the prisoner to be hung.' [*sic*]

I took Anstice up to Canberra with me and got the Minister of the Navy to take him to see the Prime Minister after the meeting, as I felt he deserved a pat on the back for all the good work he has put in. Anstice tells me the Prime Minister summed up the result in his dry way by saying, 'I think we might term this a satisfactory outcome of the Evershedden report.'

As I told Vian<sup>2</sup> in a recent letter I think we have won more than a local battle as I am certain the RAAF were strongly briefed by the RAF. The ulterior motive being, what I mentioned in my letter of 21st March, the grabbing of all activities connected with the Guided Weapon project. If the Air Force had succeeded here it is my firm belief RAF would have returned to the charge at home.

The question of including Force T in the British Commonwealth Occupation Force command was laid to rest yesterday.<sup>3</sup> I attended the Joint Chiefs of Staff Australia meeting and spoke very frankly on the subject.<sup>4</sup> I am glad to say the RAN was not mentioned in the discussion.

Chief of Imperial General Staff made some remark during his discussions with the Defence Committee, which indicated a certain

<sup>1</sup>The Evershed Report was a British report into the higher organisation of Naval Aviation in Britain, specifically whether it should be controlled by the RN or the RAF (the RAF controlled it during the interwar period). The report concluded very strongly that Naval Aviation should remain with the RN, although it did not reach a conclusion on the subject of land-based naval aviation (the RAF Coastal Command). Evershed himself was a British Judge; the report was probably written in very early 1945. See letter, Capt Bernard Foley, RAN (RANLO, London) to Adm Sir Guy Royle, RN (1st Naval Member, ACNB), 29 March 1945, Foley Papers.

<sup>2</sup>VA Sir Philip Vian, RN, subsequently promoted Adm and appointed C-in-C Home Fleet.

<sup>3</sup>Force T was that portion of Commonwealth naval forces attached to the British Commonwealth Occupation Force (BCOF). See Peter Bates, *Japan and the British Commonwealth Occupation Force 1946–52* (London, 1993) pp. 200–203.

<sup>4</sup>The Joint Chiefs of Staff Australia (JCOSA) was formed to oversee the British Commonwealth Occupation Force. See Peter Dennis, Jeffrey Grey, Ewan Morris and Robin Prior, *The Oxford Companion to Australian Military History* (Melbourne, 1995), p. 327.

amount of loose thinking and a lack of knowledge of sea-power. Talking of the Mediterranean, as long as we owned the North African coast we could probably keep the sea communications open in a future war, but even if we couldn't the roads were good and the Army could 'go hell for leather' – I believe Rommel thought the same!

Singapore was to be defended in future by Ghurkas and the Royal Air Force.

Discussing regional Control in the Pacific he was prepared to put the Army in the Far East and, as more or less of an afterthought, the British Pacific Fleet and Royal Air Force under Australian Command. I took him up on the general question and said on the analogy of the big firm and the satellite firm I thought the United Kingdom would wish to have a large say in how their shipping, men, and tools were to be used. I think it is an extremely dangerous principle in peace time to let the Australians think they are going to have *carte blanche* to do what they like with United Kingdom resources and me in a future Pacific War, and will only lead to endless recrimination when the time comes. I must admit that CIGS emphasised he was giving his personal opinion and not that of the Chiefs of Staff in United Kingdom.

### 7. *Hamilton memorandum*

3 July 1947

Council Of Defence Meeting On Thursday

Agenda No. 5/1947 – Status and Control of Naval Aviation Branch.

The following were present:–

Prime Minister	Mr. Chifley
Minister for External Affairs	Dr. Evatt
Secretary, Department of Defence	Sir Frederick Shedden
Minister for the Navy	Mr. Riordan
Minister for the Army	Mr. Chambers
Minister for Air	Mr. Drakeford
Senators	Mr. Ashley
	Mr Armstrong,

and the three Chiefs of Staff.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The Chiefs of Staff were Adm Sir Louis Hamilton, RN, Lt Gen V. A. H. Sturdee and Air Marshall G. Jones.

2. The Prime Minister opened the proceedings by turning to Mr. Drakeford and saying that this question had been deferred owing to his absence abroad, as the Prime Minister felt that out of courtesy the decision should not be taken until the Minister for Air was present to put his views. He added that since the last meeting of the Council, when the decision to have aircraft carriers had been arrived at, he had studied the question of manning thoroughly, and he doubted whether anything the Minister for Air could say would make much difference! He then asked me for my remarks.

3. I stated the Naval case, carefully avoiding any technical arguments:—

When the question of obtaining aircraft carriers for the RAN was approved in principle by the Government, I confess I was a little surprised that Chief of Air Staff should claim that RAAF could man them. My surprise was due to the fact that no other Navy – large or small – mans their carriers with anybody but Naval airmen. The war has brought out most clearly, that this is the only efficient principle to work on, I will not waste time in quoting specific cases which bear out this point in practice except to quote the Chief of the Naval Staff in Germany who wrote that ‘the lack of a Naval Air Arm in Germany manned by the Navy had a decisive effect on the inability of Germany to conduct sea warfare.’

The only stipulation that I made at the Defence Committee meeting on this subject was that I felt it necessary to obtain a team of officers from the United Kingdom with wide Naval Aviation experience both in peace and war, as there were no officers either in the RAAF or in the RAN who had the necessary qualifications and recent experience.

When the two staffs had made out their respective plans an agreed agenda was drawn up covering every detail connected with manning of Naval Aviation. A very thorough examination of these points was carried out as can be realised from the fact that the discussions went on daily for six weeks.

In accordance with the instructions of the Prime Minister the advantages and disadvantages of manning Naval Aviation both ashore and afloat with RAAF or RAN personnel have been produced in the concise report which lies before you. From which will be seen that the advantages are overwhelmingly on the side of the Navy, and the two main conclusions are:

- (1) that which ever Service provides the officers and men the cost will be approximately the same;
- (2) that manning Naval Aviation by Naval officers and men will be the more efficient.

I confess to being somewhat bewildered by the fact that CAS who had agreed all along the line with the setting up of this Joint Staff Committee should repudiate its findings. He has, since the Joint Report was produced, put forward many arguments which were examined and discarded by the Committee during their six weeks' discussion.

This repudiation is all the more surprising when one considers the directive given by the CAS to the senior RAAF Officer on the Joint Committee as recorded in the report, who stated –

'That his instructions with regard to this Conference were that discussions be directed towards the consideration of the relative advantages and disadvantages of the alternative methods for providing air personnel for RAN carriers, and that the air plan be presented for the Navy's consideration in its entirety. As far as practicable, he was to seek to align the two plans on matters of detail but not to compromise on the fundamental principles of the RAAF Plan.'

Such a directive virtually excluded an open-minded examination of the problem of ensuring the most efficient method of introducing Naval Aviation. Nevertheless, the RAAF members of the Committee were forced to arrive at the conclusions I have just quoted. It is worth noting also that these conclusions are substantiated by the findings of all countries who have been involved in this problem.

The really serious aspect of the problem has I feel been insufficiently stressed up to date, although it came out constantly in the Joint Staff discussions. I refer to the psychological or personal factors involved and to make this clear I would like to go back to the end of the war. The Navy had suffered heavy losses but had shown themselves fully equal in seamanlike and fighting qualities to any Navy in the World. Officers and men were in fact on the crest of the wave, they knew they had made their mark, were justly proud of themselves, all they asked as reward was a modern Fleet in which they could continue to serve and carry on the excellent fighting traditions amassed in two wars.

As the months slipped by and nothing happened both officers and men on the permanent List became restive, they knew, no-one better, their ships were out of date that without Naval Aviation the RAN would not count as a useful unit. I have spent some considerable time in the last two years talking to ship's companies and individual officers, counselling patience, pointing out the Government difficulties, and that I was certain they would get the modern Fleet they all desired. In spite of this permanent officers have been drifting away, in particular some very capable Engineer Officers who have been snapped up by outside firms. In addition very few of the partially trained war-time officers have volunteered to stay on owing to the uncertain future.

When Government recently approved the acquisition of two carriers and laying the foundations of a modern fleet under the five year plan, I was certain morale would go up with a bang, to my consternation nothing of the sort has happened. The main reason, especially among officers of all ranks, is the doubt over how Naval Aviation is to be manned.

The plan put forward by Chief of Air Staff is in effect telling the RAN they are incapable of doing what every other sea-going Navy in the world does. In other words the RAN is to be saddled with landsmen from another Service to fight their weapons for them. A factor more calculated to destroy the morale of the RAN I can not imagine.

*To sum up:* The cost of both plans is the same, the Joint staff agree the Naval plan is the more efficient, and above all the psychological factor is so strong, that I have absolutely no doubt on the correct answer

Finally, I can say with absolute conviction that if Naval Aviation is started in the RAN on a really sound basis, with all the 25 years' experience of the RN and USN, behind it, your Squadron will become the most efficient Naval fighting unit in the world. My reason for saying so is the force will be big enough to work independently and small enough to retain the personal touch and intimate knowledge of every officer and man in it, so essential for success in war. Moreover, the RAN will redound to this country's prestige and credit abroad in these days of Power politics more than any other visible asset.

4. In reply the Minister for Air produced all the arguments of 20 years ago and in effect damned Aircraft Carriers on the score of the unlimited range of modern shore-based aircraft. The Prime Minister intervened to say that the question of Aircraft Carriers had already been decided. Mr. Drakeford then went on to make some highly contentious statements bearing on duplication of Air Forces, training and maintenance facilities etc. I only interrupted him once when he stated that the RAAF had trained the Fleet Air Arm pilots for the British Pacific Fleet.

5. The Minister for the Navy followed and demolished Mr. Drakeford's arguments one by one from an able brief supplied by Captain Anstice.

6. Chief of Air Staff (Air Marshal Jones) then reiterated and embellished many of the old arguments.

7. When Chief of General Staff (Lieutenant-General Sturdee) was asked for his views, he gave unqualified support to the Navy, more especially on the obvious inefficiency of having two Services working

alongside one another in the confined space of a man-of-war, each having different discipline, different uniform, and different outlook.

8. Dr. Evatt strongly supported the Naval view, as in fact did everyone present with the exception of Minister for Air and Chief of Air Staff.

9. The Prime Minister summed up shortly and the matter was decided in favour of the Navy without any reservations.

10. The Minister for Air desired to have recorded his view that the establishment of a separate Naval Aviation Branch fails to take into account the developments of air power and prospective developments based upon the experience obtained in World War II, and that it is not in the best interests of Australian defence, which can best be served by the adoption of the plan put forward by the RAAF.

### 8. *Cunningham to Hamilton*

16 July 1947

Thank you very much for your letter of 17th June, and also for enclosing the statement made by the Minister of Defence on Australian post-War defence policy. I agree with you that it is a masterly exposition, and McGrigor, who knows him personally, is writing to Shedden to congratulate him.<sup>1</sup>

2. I was very glad to note that the RAN is to get more than either the Australian Army or Air Force, although admittedly £15,000,000 is not as much as I know you would like them to have. I was also glad to learn since that the RAN are to man their own carriers.

3. I was very interested to hear of your reactions to the visit of Admiral Denfeld. I agree that it would be a good idea if US Officers can visit Canberra to discuss Pacific defence with the Australian Defence Committee, provided that they remain on a purely Service level. I would be glad if you would let Boyd know when these Staff discussions eventuate, so that he can send a representative if he feels like it.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Sir Rhoderick McGrigor was then a Vice Admiral and the Vice Chief of Naval Staff. He became 1st Sea Lord in 1951.

<sup>2</sup>Adm Sir Denis W. Boyd was the C-in-C British Pacific Fleet 1946–49. He had previously commanded the aircraft carrier HMS *Illustrious*, most notably during the Battle of Taranto in 1940.

4. CIGS seems to have been having a very busy time in Australia, judging not only from the press reports but the number of signals which he has sent back to London. As you may well imagine, they have kept the remainder of the Chiefs of Staff pretty busy trying to sort out his suggestions.

### 9. *Hamilton to Cunningham*

27 November 1947

As I indicated in my letter of 8th September, implementing the 5-year RAN Plan is proving extremely difficult and is in real danger of falling down, so I feel I had better put you in the picture as far as I am able from this side of the world.

Originally my estimates were £15¾ million per year for 5 years. I was given £15 million and told to produce a scheme for saving the additional £¾ million p.a. This was done by cutting out Brisbane, reducing Melbourne, and disposing of certain small vessels of the Reserve Fleet. Mainly for political reasons these proposals are not meeting with much response from the Government.

On top of this came the increased cost of construction of the two Carriers and the comparatively large cost of modernisation in about three years' time. The amount budgeted for in the Naval Aviation Plan only covered the original cost of completion quoted in Admiralty signal 141626/September, 1946, plus £½ million for each Carrier to cover costs of docking and maintenance over the next ten years.

The Prime Minister is adamant that he will not allot one penny over £15 million p.a. to the Navy, and the implication in a letter to the Minister of the Navy regarding the increased cost of the Carriers was that I and/or the Admiralty had led him up the garden path by underestimating the costs. Every other item of Naval expenditure has been cut to the bone, so there is no hope of finding the extra Carrier expense by economising in any other direction.

I have had an instinctive feeling for some weeks that old Chifley, having enjoyed the propaganda from the 5-year Defence Plan and bolstered up by the much published alleged statement by the Chief of the Imperial General Staff that there would be no war for fifteen years, is putting the brake on expenditure to have funds available for some spectacular election concession to voters. Alternatively to put the matter in its best light Chifley is intent on driving a real hard bargain with the United Kingdom and is prepared to hamstring the Naval Plan on the excuse that the Admiralty mis-informed him over the cost. What's more I do not think

he will attempt to put forward any alternative suggestions, so that unless the initiative comes from Admiralty I feel there is a real danger of Royal Australian Naval Aviation being stillborn.

The only alternatives I can suggest should be put forward by Admiralty are:—

- (a) For Admiralty to stick to the original costs quoted in Admiralty's 141626/September, 1946 and bear the cost of modernisation.
- (b) To offer the first Carrier on loan, offer the second Carrier at half cost of completion, and Australia bear the cost of modernisation of both Carriers.
- (c) Loan both Carriers and replace later with modernised Carriers.

None of these alternatives will appeal to the United Kingdom Treasury, on the other hand the establishment of Naval Aviation in Australia appears to have several concrete advantages to the United Kingdom. I have listed these in the attached appendix.

You may say why not have one Carrier to start with. My argument throughout has been that two Carriers are the minimum required for a balanced force in War and for training in Peace. Moreover, I feel the maintenance organisation for one Carrier would be hard to justify as a separate entity from the RAAF.

Soon after I arrived here Andrew Cunningham<sup>1</sup> wrote and suggested it might be a good thing to tell the Australians where they got off, I demurred at the time and am now more than ever convinced that if the RAN is to be modernised it will be necessary to make further concessions to this Labour Government until they are really committed. To give them their due Labour's views on Defence have advanced enormously since pre-war days, but they are still suspicious of an RN First Naval Member and the Admiralty. In the circumstances I feel that in the interests of Australian Defence and the Empire it will pay to turn the other cheek and offer them some further concession with a view to a long term dividend in the future.

I have recently returned from New Zealand where I am afraid Simpson has a most difficult row to hoe.<sup>2</sup> I was surprised to find the whole organisation as small as it is, and that the RNZN was allotted less money than either of the other Services. I enclose the copy of a letter I wrote to Shedden in the hope of being able to help Simpson. My personal opinion

<sup>1</sup>Adm Sir Andrew Cunningham was 1st Sea Lord when Hamilton was loaned to the RAN for appointment as 1st Naval Member.

<sup>2</sup>Cdre G. W. G. Simpson, RN was loaned to the RNZN as Chief of Naval Staff from 1947 to 1949/50 (date uncertain). After returning to the RN he was appointed as the Flag Officer, Germany (1950-51) and Flag Officer, Submarines (1952-54).

is that unless the New Zealand Navy is closely tied up with the RAN it will be of no use either to New Zealand or the Empire.

In other words the money now goes in a dockyard which is usually idle, a comparatively big stores set-up, and a recruit training establishment, all of which facilities could be supplied by Australia. If this were politically feasible New Zealand should be able to keep two cruisers in commission and thereby supply a sea control unit of some practical value. It is on these lines that I propose to talk to Simpson if he comes over here.

The only other item that may interest you is that I have persuaded my brother Chiefs of Staff to write a combined letter to Shedden signed by all three asking him to take Chairman of the Defence Committee. The idea behind this move is that as he has all the power he may as well have some of the responsibility! Whether he will fall for it or not I don't know, but, after a lot of thought on the subject I am convinced that it is the only way to get the Post-War Service Plans implemented.

[Appendix:] Naval Aviation Facilities In Australia.

The establishment of Naval Aviation in the RAN will, as at present planned, provide the following facilities in the event of R N Carriers requiring maintenance and other services in Australian waters:

- (I) (a) a fully equipped base, including –
  - (i) Disembarkation for about 4 CAGs in addition to the RAN CAGs.<sup>1</sup>
  - (ii) A Naval Air Stores Depot, carrying a War Reserve of stocks.
  - (iii) A completely equipped Maintenance and Repair Yard.
  - (iv) A technical Training Establishment.
  - (v) Necessary ranges for all forms of Armament training.
  - (vi) A Flying Training Organisation capable of expansion to meet War requirements.
- (b) an Administrative organisation –
  - (i) Capable of interpreting the RN Naval Aviation requirements.
  - (ii) Holding the essential technical and other libraries and qualifications.
  - (iii) Holding positions on Australian National Aviation bodies, such as Research Establishment, component standardisation and Production Committee, etc., and

<sup>1</sup>Carrier Air Group (CAG).

therefore conversant with the country's capacity for aviation work.

(II) A Civilian Repair Organisation dealing with RN types, this giving –

- (i) Machinery for the repair of RN aircraft.
- (ii) A pool of skilled labour.
- (iii) The necessary technical background.
- (iv) In the foreseeable future, production of RN components and aircraft.

(III) Ship Maintenance

By virtue of refitting and repairing and storing RAN, CVLs the necessary machinery and technique will exist for the maintenance in War-time of any Carrier.<sup>1</sup>

10. *Message,<sup>2</sup> Australian Government to Commonwealth Relations Office*

3 December 1947

No: 332

For Prime Minister from Prime Minister<sup>3</sup>

1. Reference your telegram No. 181, of 16th August, in which I confirmed the offer made by the Admiralty to the Commonwealth Naval Board, to the transfer to the Royal Australian Navy two of the suspended Majestic light fleet carriers at half the total cost of construction, which was estimated to be between £2,750,000 and £3,000,000 per vessel, exclusive of their outfits of stores and armaments, which were to be an Australian liability. It is now learned that these vessels will require modernisation involving substantial additional expenditure.

2. The dimensions of the post-war defence programme were determined by the amount which the Government considered could be devoted to

<sup>1</sup>Light Aircraft Carrier (CVL).

<sup>2</sup>The terms signal and message are synonyms; signal is the naval term and message is the term used more widely through armies, air forces and the remainder of government. The distinction has been retained to indicate the context (particularly senders and recipients) of the communication.

<sup>3</sup>The Australian and British Prime Ministers were Ben Chifley and Clement Atlee respectively.

defence, and it was decided that the maximum amount that could be provided over five years was £250,000,000. To enable Australia to make a greater contribution to Empire Naval Defence, the largest quota was allocated to the Navy which received an allotment of £75,000,000 as against £62,500,000 each for the Army and Air Force.

3. The financial basis of the programme having thus been determined the service advisers were requested to state the strengths and organisation which could be provided from the financial allotments approved for each service.

4. The Naval Board's programme included the acquisition of the two light fleet carriers, and this was approved by the Government on the understanding that they could be provided within the allotment for Naval Defence. It now transpires that this is not possible, as no provision was made in the Naval programme for the additional cost of modernisation. It is also understood that, even after modernisation the operational capacity of vessels of this class will be limited after 1955 if future aircraft have increased weight. This would appear to be a serious consideration from the defence aspect, in view of such a large outlay for Naval Defence. If modernisation is not carried out, the desirability of obtaining this type of carrier appears to be a matter of even greater doubt.

5. In view of the statement made by me to the Conference of Prime Ministers last year, that it was recognised that Australia must in future make a larger contribution towards the defence of the British Commonwealth in the Pacific, I would appreciate advice of the manner in which it is considered the Naval programme might be adjusted to provide for this intention. It may be mentioned that the RAN squadron has already been reduced by one cruiser, which was to have been kept in commission as Hobart has been paid off to provide the crew for the first carrier.

#### **11. *Signal, Naval Board to Admiralty***

4 December 1947

040611Z December

Personal for First Sea Lord from Admiral Hamilton

1. Reference telegram from Prime Minister Australia to Prime Minister UK despatched probably on 3rd Dec, concerning increased costs of aircraft carriers.

2. I have written to you fully in letter dated 27th November which you should receive 9th December and suggest you await arrival of my letter before making decision.

3. There are indications, it would be acceptable to Australian Government if first carriers were on loan and Australia bear the cost of modernisation of both carriers.

4. If UK Government concur in proposal para 3. suggest your reply indicates that UK are prepared to bear this extra cost as the shore maintenance and training facilities are essential for a force of 2 carriers will be in itself a major contribution towards the defence of British Commonwealth in Pacific and of particular value to Empire Carrier Forces in war.

## 12. *Signal, Admiralty to Naval Board*

9 December 1947

091902 December

PERSONAL      NODECO<sup>1</sup>      IMPORTANT

Personal from First Sea Lord for Admiral Hamilton

1. Your 040611. You will, of course realise how extremely difficult is the financial situation here today. In framing our proposals for the expenditure of the very limited money which we will get we have proceeded upon the assumption that the arrangement regarding the two Australian carriers would be implemented and have, in fact, in anticipation of formal agreement, put in hand measures entailing considerable expenditure. Were we now to adopt the suggestion put forward in paragraph 3 of your 040611Z we should have nothing repetition nothing left to spend upon our own carriers.

2. I am sending you by air mail a paper which I am putting forward but which has not yet been considered in high circles, in which I am proposing

<sup>1</sup> 'NODECO' in the header information of a signal is an abbreviation for 'No Decode'. It directs that the text of the signal would not have been decoded by the communications sailors in Navy Headquarters. Instead, either Admiral Hamilton or more probably his Secretary would have decoded the text. This indicates that the sender considered the information contained was very sensitive and should be very closely guarded.

that Australia should be offered the right to replace one of the *Majestics* by a *Hermes* should they so desire, in, say, five years time.<sup>1</sup> Under this scheme it is proposed that Australia should buy two *Majestics* at half the cost of construction plus the cost of modernisation and an additional £250,000 in respect of the replacement of 1 *Majestic* by 1 *Hermes*. This would avoid our being saddled with the cost of completing the *Terrible* and at the same time enable Australia at a later date to gain experience with a carrier capable of operating any foreseeable type of aircraft.

3. It seems that little of the additional cost involved under this offer need come out of the current five year programme.

## Part 2

### Collins and J. D. Cunningham

#### 13. *Collins to Cunningham*

23 April 1948

Having been in this chair for some two months now I am acting on your invitation to write personally to you from time to time, although I expect Sir Louis has recently given you an up-to-date account of affairs here.<sup>2</sup>

The acceptance of the two *Majestics* was a victory but it was a pity that the Defence Department put that stupid last paragraph in the message that made it appear done with a bad grace.<sup>3</sup> Our main headaches now are manning and rising costs. The former is really serious as very few of our 2-year engagement men are signing on again due to boom conditions ashore, high wages, short hours, etc. We shall be hard put to it to man our squadron towards the end of the year but I am putting the carrier and naval aviation first and we shall meet those commitments at all costs.

We are counting on receiving the loan personnel already promised and would like a lot more but I know your difficulties are as great as ours; also there is a reluctance on the part of the Government to approve more loan

<sup>1</sup>The *Majestic* class was similar to the *Albion* class: the *Albions* were larger, built slightly later and therefore had better potential for modernisation to cope with jet aircraft. HMS *Hermes* was the single modified *Albion*-class carrier completed for the RN.

<sup>2</sup>Adm Sir Louis Hamilton, RN was Collins' predecessor as 1st Naval Member and Chief of Naval Staff.

<sup>3</sup>The two *Majestics* were the carriers Australia purchased for the RAN; HMA Ships *Sydney* and *Melbourne*.

personnel. However a way out presents itself by the desire of many ex Royal Navy ratings, as expressed to Australia House in London, to join the Royal Australian Navy and emigrate. I am trying to get permission to recruit ex Royal Navy general service and naval aviation ratings in the United Kingdom, up to 1,000 if possible, and sign them on to re-enter for 6 years. According to the Naval Liaison Officer there are plenty offering. This is very much in the proposal stage at present and the Commonwealth Government have so far only approved negotiations for 200 ex RN loan to join *Terrible*.<sup>1</sup>

If we get no further windfall of this sort in 6 months time we shall only be able to keep one fully manned ship constantly in Japan (which entails 3 ships) and fulfil the aviation commitment.<sup>2</sup> The squadron will consist of *Australia*, two tribals and a frigate in 'training commission' which means a very reduced complement backed up by young ratings straight from new entry school.

Rising costs have already increased the estimate of our 5-year £75 million naval programme by £15 million, which the government is reluctant to provide, and shorter hours etc, will reduce the result. The destroyer building programme is lagging far behind.

I am afraid the United Kingdom Joint Service Representative has had a dull time so far and Mark Pizey has been very patient.<sup>3</sup> However it appears that Sir Frederick Shedden has been awaiting the Defence Council Meeting next Wednesday to report to Cabinet before giving the word to implement the high sounding phrases contained in the documents on the subject. If anyone can make it work Mark Pizey will.

I am sorry if this letter seems rather complaining. Actually things are cheerful. We have 10,000 men, and good ones, in the Royal Australian Navy. We have plenty of food and sunshine and I personally am very much enjoying the task in hand.

<sup>1</sup>*Terrible* was the name allocated by the Royal Navy to the carrier commissioned into the RAN as HMAS *Sydney*.

<sup>2</sup>The RAN was committed to providing one ship to the naval component of the British Commonwealth Occupations Force (BCOF). This naval component was known as Force T.

<sup>3</sup>RA (later Adm Sir) C. T. Mark Pizey, RN, was the Head of the United Kingdom Service Liaison Staff, 1948-50. He was subsequently appointed FO, 1st Cruiser Squadron before being loaned to the Indian Navy as their C-in-C and Chief of Naval Staff, 1951-55. On returning to the RN he served as C-in-C, Portsmouth, 1955-58.

14. *Cunningham to Collins*

28 May 1948

I was very pleased to get your letter of 23rd April and to learn that you were settling down in your new appointment.

2. I was very pleased to see that it has been decided to accept two *Majestics*. I am sure that this is the best solution and that you will not regret the decision. I am sorry, but not surprised, to hear that you are troubled with manning difficulties. As you know very well, we are similarly placed over here.

3. I am told that arrangements have already been made to loan 245 aviation ratings to the Naval Air Station NOWRA, and 257 to *Terrible*, less a number of trained RAN aviation ratings available in the United Kingdom by the date of commissioning. In addition, the Admiralty has recently received a request for permission to recruit 200 ex-RN General Service ratings to help man *Terrible*. The Admiralty has no objection whatever to this in principle and will be referring Australia House to the 'National Association for the Employment of Regular ex-Soldiers, Sailors and Airmen', to whom men are advised to apply for jobs on leaving the Services. It is difficult to give an opinion as to the success in recruiting up to 1,000 ex-RN ratings that you suggest, as it depends largely on the conditions of service you offer. These are not, I understand, yet known, but I am sure that our manning people are keeping in close touch with the RAN Liaison Officer here in London.<sup>1</sup>

## Part 3

## Collins and Fraser

15. *Collins to Fraser*

16 July 1948

The latest information we have here is that you will be taking over as First Sea Lord in August but we have as yet no definite date so I am writing

<sup>1</sup>The RAN Liaison Officer (RANLO) was Capt Bernard Foley, RAN.

now to convey to you the best wishes and congratulations of the Royal Australian Navy, and your many friends in Australia.

In the past it has been the custom for the First Naval Member to write personally to the First Sea Lord from time to time, particularly when questions arose that were not altogether suitable for the official channels. Admiral Cunningham was kind enough to tell me to continue this practice and I hope you will not mind if I sometimes write personally to you to keep you in the RAN picture.

A minor matter that is exercising our minds at the moment is the question of the musical salutes to be played when guards and bands are paraded – this arises, of course, from the forthcoming Royal visit. By long standing (for the RAN) custom the Naval Board have always been accorded ‘Rule Britannia’. I can however find no reference on our files of any agreement by the Admiralty to the use of these musical honours. Of course it might be argued that such was not necessary and that we could play what tune we like. However I think it would only be courteous to have confirmation that Their Lordships are aware of and have no objection to the practice. The gun salute is officially agreed upon.

The foregoing is fairly plain sailing: the question of the procedure when the Minister for the Navy visits a ship has, however, now been raised. Logically as the First Lord gets the same musical honours as the Board of Admiralty, the Minister for the Navy should get the same as the Naval Board, namely ‘Rule Britannia’ (RAN Rear-Admirals are given ‘Iolanthe’ as for RN officers). I should be most grateful for your view on whether Rule Britannia is considered appropriate for the Minister for the Navy; perhaps we should play Advance Australia Fair!!<sup>1</sup>

This all sounds very petty but *Vanguard* will no doubt want some briefing on our ceremonial customs and it is as well to have them sorted out.<sup>2</sup> For many years we have had a comprehensive local order on the subject based on KR and AI but we have not as yet faced up to the problem of the Minister.

I am hoping Their Majesties will agree to the use of HMAS *Australia* for their Barrier Reef trip and that they will decide to land at Flinders Naval Depot from the *Vanguard* for their Victorian tour.

We are getting ahead as fast as possible with our 5-year programme but shortage of man-power and materials [*sic*] are slowing us up. I am hoping for a good response to our recruiting campaign for a thousand ex-RN

<sup>1</sup> ‘Advance Australia Fair’ was written in 1878 by Peter Dodds McCormack, but was not adopted as the Australian National Anthem until 1974. In 1948 ‘God Save the King (Queen)’ was still the Australian National Anthem.

<sup>2</sup> HMS *Vanguard* was the Royal Navy’s last battleship and the only one in the world completed after WW2.

ratings in England and am not too distressed to learn that our second carrier will be delayed as it will give us more time to train personnel to man her.

I apologise for troubling you with these minor matters when I know you will be snowed under with more important events; perhaps, however, one of your staff could consider the musical honours problem and let us know before the Royal visit.

#### 16. *Fraser to Collins*

14 August 1948

Thank you so much for your letter and for the kind message of good wishes which it contained. I shall be delighted if you will continue the custom of writing personally to me as First Sea Lord from time to time on any matter which you do not think suitable for official channels.

2. Concerning the question of musical salutes for the Naval Board, I quite agree with you, and feel certain that Their Lordships would have no objection to your present practice.

3. With reference to the procedure when the Minister for the Navy visits a ship, I consider that Rule Britannia would be the appropriate tune to play.

4. I imagine you are pretty well involved in the arrangements for the visit of the *Vanguard*: I feel sure it will be a great success.

#### 17. *Collins to Fraser*

7 September 1948

The last paragraph of CAFO 235/48 of 27th August received here today (a quick delivery) states 'modernised *Majestic* class and modernised *Colossus* class will be capable of operating new Trade protection type aircraft only'. This is such a shattering blow that I am writing direct to you rather than taking it up with the 5th SL.

2. As you may know we have had a big struggle to get the Government to agree to modernisation of our carriers and we have (I hope) just persuaded the Prime Minister to accept the very reasonable Admiralty offer to call the price £500,000 and to modernise the second carrier before

delivery. This was done on the understanding that the modernised *Majestic* would be capable of operating the Naval Aviation aircraft in sight. If the CAFO is correct it cuts the ground from under our feet, but I can't believe it is so. I should be most grateful for reassurance on this point in view of the following paraphrase from TOP SECRET cablegram from your Prime Minister to our Prime Minister No. 30 of 30th January, 1948:

'On the information at present available to the Admiralty both class will, after modernisation, be capable of operating all the naval aircraft that will be in service in the middle fifties and possibly well beyond that date'

and also your Prime Minister to our Prime Minister No. 163 of 3rd June, 1948:

'It is most desirable in the opinion of the United Kingdom authorities that RAN should possess, at the earliest possible date, a carrier which is capable of operating most modern aircraft and strongly advise that the second *Majestic* should be modernised whilst completing.'

3. Another matter which has been causing me great concern is the trouble over our security. I can only assure you that the Chiefs of Staff here are doing all they can to get an improvement but of course you will be aware of our difficulties and even if we achieved 100% security it would take years to live down the bad name.<sup>1</sup> I'm afraid it will be a long struggle before we get anything like real security. Perhaps a show down on the Canadian lines may be necessary.

4. We are most grateful for Admiralty's action regarding our oil fuel supplies but even with this latest allocation we are a long way off our desired reserve of 250,000 tons. However we are thankful for not inconsiderable mercies.

5. The response to our recruiting ex RN ratings in the United Kingdom has not been bad, although we shall only get about 400 into *Kanimbla*

<sup>1</sup>In early 1948 US cryptanalysts deciphered a Soviet code which revealed, amongst other things, that Australians in the Department of External Affairs (now the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade) were passing information to the USSR. In April 1948 the USA ceased sharing any classified information with Australia until security measures were improved, a situation which lasted until 1950. For a more detailed account, see Desmond Ball and David Horner, *Breaking the Codes: Australia's KGB Network, 1944–1950* (Sydney, 1998).

instead of the desired 1,000. I hope they are a good type for they will be most useful immigrants.

6. I expect details of *Vanguard's* visit are not your direct concern but I hope we shall be able to give the Ship's Company a good time in Australia.

### 18. *Fraser to Collins*

20 September 1948

Thank you for your letter dated 7th September.

I quite understand that the final paragraph of CAFO 235/48 must have come as a severe blow to you. As you will have heard by the time you receive this letter, that paragraph was incorrect and action has been taken to cancel it.

2. Unfortunately, I find that the Prime Minister's telegram No. 30 of the 30th January, 1948, while being in itself strictly correct, may have conveyed a somewhat false impression for the following reason. By 1955–57 we *may* have in service the jet-propelled night fighter which the *Majestics* and modernised *Colossus* classes will not be able to operate. On the other hand, this night fighter project is only in the design stage and may never eventuate.

At the time this telegram was drafted, my predecessor suggested an amendment to cover this point, but the amendment was not included.

3. It will, of course, be necessary for the Admiralty to inform the Australian Government officially in due course of this limitation that the Carriers will have, but, the financial side of the negotiations has been difficult and, in view of the uncertainty whether the night fighters will in fact materialise, you will understand that the timing of the dispatch of the letter on this subject to the Australian Government requires consideration.

4. I fully understand your anxieties concerning security. I am afraid there is no doubt about the 'bad name' which you mention, and it is quite true that it will take a long time to live down. Nevertheless I know that you are doing, and will continue to do, all that you can to improve matters.

5. I am so glad that you are not dissatisfied with the results of recruiting ex RN ratings here.

6. I know well what a good time *Vanguard* will get at the hands of all your hospitable people and I envy them. Please remember me to any of my Australian friends that you see and say how warmly I think of them all.

7. My best wishes to yourself in your most important job. I hope you will write to me whenever you wish. My regards to your wife.

### 19. *Collins to Fraser*

20 December 1948

With the end of the year in sight I thought I might let you know how things appear at the other side of the world, tell you briefly how the RAN fares, and also thank you for letter of 20th September. I quite understand about the jet-propelled night fighter and agree that it would be preferable to mention it at this stage. We have decided to order Sea Furies and Fireflies (there was the usual talk of jet-propelled aircraft) for our second CAG, which is forming before second carrier is ready. Our plan is to send *Sydney* back to pick them up in 1950.

2. With the commissioning of *Sydney* I have decided to kill that misnomer HMA Squadron and substitute the old term HMA Fleet. The sea-going RAN now consists of a carrier, a cruiser squadron, a destroyer flotilla, a frigate flotilla, a training flotilla of a frigate and two corvettes, the two training ships, a couple of LST's and an LSI. I am sure you'll agree that such a collection is not a squadron, even if it's small for a fleet. The Rear-Admiral Commanding will become FOCAF.

3. The cancellation of the Royal Visit was a great disappointment to us all, particularly observing its reason. However from the purely naval aspect it is rather a relief as we should have had to close down all schools and even enter volunteer reservists for the visit to meet our commitments. With delay in arrival of the *Sydney* we are going to be at our nadir for manning in about May next year. We are keeping just above 10,000 and won't do much more than stem the tide until we work off the 'two year men' next June.

4. It was a pity we had to delay *Sydney* for the new barriers but our flying experts here were very decided that we run no risk of smashes or failures in our new aviation branch.

5. Planning is much to the fore at the moment and Mark Pizey is proving of great value. We are trying to sort out the 'area' question which I think got slightly off the rails owing to our Prime Minister's approval to proceed with plans being taken in Whitehall to mean that we wanted full responsibility for planning in the area. The idea of the Australian Chiefs of Staff at the time was that we should *participate* in planning in the area vital to us, but should be fully *responsible* for planning *only* in the area for which we accept full strategic responsibility. However there is much to be said for the Whitehall view and we are considering the matter over Christmas.

6. I had a very fruitful and enjoyable visit to Pearl Harbour [*sic*] and found they were thinking on much the same lines as ourselves. For your own information the limits to our proposed responsibility on the North and East were decided in consultation with Commander-in-Chief, Pacific, so as to have some workable arrangement ready in the event of the only possible trouble. I was interested to see that the latest Western limit proposed by the United Kingdom joint planners coincides with the United States line.<sup>1</sup>

7. The limiting factor in the achievement of our 5-years' programme is no longer money. We have approval to proceed with everything in the programme that is physically possible, despite rising costs. Owing to lack of man-power and materials we shall only do about 75% of what was planned, and that will cost us about £90 million.<sup>2</sup>

8. Suspicions of our security measures continue as a major headache. In the old days when we did everything on the Service level there was no trouble but now so much has to go through Canberra it's very difficult. One wonders whether it's worth while going on with the Rocket Range, manufacture of VT fuses and such like, if we are not going to get all the information required.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>This visit to Pearl Harbor led to agreement between the USN and RAN on areas of responsibility in the Pacific, probably for issues such as coordination between Naval Commands, communications and search and rescue. These were all addressed again and formalised in 1951 by the Radford-Collins agreement.

<sup>2</sup>The ACNB devoted considerable attention to both general and individual personnel issues and the minutes of their meetings for at least 15 years after the war reflect the severe concerns that were held. See NAA, A2585/1, *passim*; the minutes for the Naval Board Meeting of 17 March 1948 are one example.

<sup>3</sup>The Rocket Range was the Long Range Weapons Establishment at Woomera and Salisbury in South Australia. VT fuses were Variable Time fuses used for medium-calibre anti-aircraft munitions.

9. Last but not least there is the question of a Rear-Admiral to relieve Farncomb in the Squadron about October next year.<sup>1</sup> Showers, my only possible, has 9 years in but is not going to get his Flag in January.<sup>2</sup> We can't have our allowance of Admirals (three) all from the same term and thus retiring at the same time. Owing to war casualties I have no senior Captain to take the Squadron as a Commodore First Class. Anyway I feel it's a good Rear-Admiral's command. I am therefore asking the Minister's approval to request a Rear-Admiral from the Admiralty for command of HMA Fleet about next October. I hope you will be able to meet this request and to give us a good one.

There will also be a senior Captain required as Commodore 2nd Class, 4th Naval Member and Commodore (Air) to relieve Willoughby about May, 1950.<sup>3</sup>

## 20. *Fraser to Collins*

14 January 1949

Thank you for your letter of 20th December.

I was interested to hear of your decision to revert to the original title of HMA Fleet, and I agree that this title is more suitable to describe the Forces you now have.

2. No doubt your flying experts were right in deciding to delay *Sydney* for the new barriers.

3. I was glad to hear that Pizey and his team are proving to be of value to you. I hope we shall soon get the question of 'Areas' decided. As you

<sup>1</sup>RA H. B. Farncomb, RAN. Farncomb was a classmate of Collins in the 1913 Naval College entry and an outstanding officer. He would probably have succeeded Collins as 1st Naval Member but for concern over his medical fitness caused by alcoholism. As a result he was retired from the RAN in 1951, after which he overcame his alcohol dependency and took up a successful career as a lawyer. See Ritchie, *Australian Dictionary of Biography*, Vol 14 (Melbourne, 1996), pp. 139–41, and Peter Dennis, Jeffrey Grey, Ewan Morris and Robin Prior, *The Oxford Companion to Australian Military History* (Melbourne, 1995), p. 231.

<sup>2</sup>RA Henry Arthur Showers, RAN, served in many senior positions in the RAN. He commanded HMA Ship *Adelaide* 1939–42, *Hobart* 1942–43 and *Shropshire* 1944. During 1944–46 and 1948–50 he served as the 2nd Naval Member, and commanded HMAS *Cerberus* in the intervening period 1946–48. Showers' appointments from 1944 were as a Commodore, and as an Acting Rear Admiral FOICEA from 1950–55. He was never promoted to substantive Rear Admiral, although he was made an Honorary Rear Admiral on retirement in 1955.

<sup>3</sup>Cdre (later RA) Guy Willoughby, RN was the 4th Naval Member, 1948–50. He was subsequently appointed as the commissioning Captain of the carrier HMS *Eagle* and then became FO Flying Training.

know, the exact limits are still under discussion at the Prime Minister Level. It is very satisfactory that you have such good contacts with the American Commander-in-Chief, Pacific.

4. I fully realise your difficulties over security, and entirely agree that the difficulties arise because things are no longer on a Service level as formerly.

5. With regard to reliefs, I have been looking into the question of the loan of a Rear Admiral to relieve Farncomb, and I find that we will be able to do this if your Minister puts forward the request. It will also be possible to relieve Willoughby by a Senior Captain about May, 1950.

With all good wishes for 1949.

## 21. *Collins to Fraser*

5 August 1949

You will no doubt have heard by the time this letter arrives that Rear-Admiral Farncomb on relief by Eccles as Flag Officer Commanding, HMA Fleet, is to go to Washington as Head of the Australian Joint Service Staff, Naval Representative and Naval Attache.<sup>1</sup> The present intention is for him to remain there for a 2-year appointment after which been suggested that he should do some time in United Kingdom before relieving me as First Naval Member, subject to Government decision at the appropriate time.

The Prime Minister has referred to advice in 1944 from the then First Sea Lord to Mr. Curtin that experience of the use of aircraft in connection with naval warfare and important staff and administrative experience at the Admiralty were necessary qualifications for the appointment of First Naval Member. A two year period was suggested.

I should be very grateful if you could give me the present opinion on this matter with particular reference to the arrangements you consider might be most appropriate to follow in Farncomb's case.

<sup>1</sup>RA (later Adm Sir) John A. S. Eccles, RN was loaned to the RAN as FOCAF in 1949. He returned to the RN in late 1951 where he was appointed as Adm Commanding Reserves, FO Air Home and C-in-C Home Fleet (the RN equivalent of FOCAF). During the first half of 1949 Collins travelled to the UK and had at least one meeting with Fraser (26 April 1949) thus obviating the need for correspondence. The meeting covered a wide range of subjects but the principal topic discussed was the RAN carrier purchase and the ability of the carriers to operate future aircraft types. See copies of minutes and related correspondence in TNA, ADM 205/72.

22. *Collins to Fraser*

5 August 1949

I have written a separate letter about Farncomb in case you want to circulate it. Here is some additional background and also some other matters which I should like to talk about.

My four years in this appointment will be up in early 1952, i.e. about the time Farncomb is due for relief at Washington. As you know, the present Government is firm on the policy that an Australian Officer should be First Naval Member, so any time spent in the United Kingdom by Farncomb would probably require an extension of my time. This would suit me well personally as there is no other suitable naval job for me in Australia after First Naval Member. On the other hand if Farncomb does two years in the United Kingdom it would mean an extension of my time to 6 years which you may consider too long for one man to stay in charge.

Another matter on an entirely different subject has just come to my notice. The cablegram asking for our comments on exchange of ships dated early January has only just arrived here from the Prime Minister's Department. I don't know whether the hang up was intentional or accidental. The situation is that so long as we have the commitment of the British Support Unit in Japan to meet, which entails the allocation of 2 destroyers and a frigate almost solely on this duty, we cannot do any small ship exchange. *Sydney*, which requires a destroyer constantly in attendance, must remain in Australian waters until she returns to the United Kingdom in mid 1950 to pick up the second Carrier Air Group and *Australia* is really only a training ship now. So although we entirely agree in principle I'm afraid we cannot implement any exchange ship arrangements at present.

Manning continues to be our chief headache, and will continue to be, so long as there are boom conditions ashore. We have struck some trouble with our ex-RN ratings in regard to housing. They were all warned that there is no accommodation in Australia but thought no doubt that 'it would be alright on the night'. Legally we are quite clear but morally we must do something and are now trying to get some form of housing for ex-RN wives, even to the extent of becoming real estate agents ourselves and running a village of pre-fabs. It's obvious that we must have some results to show before we start another drive for ex-RN's, which we hope to do early next year.

The machinery is very slow but we hope to have ground out agreement for the RN submarines basing in Sydney early next week.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>The RN based the 4th Submarine division (3 T class submarines) in Sydney from December 1949. The final RN submarine, HMS *Trump*, departed in January 1969 when the 1st Australian Submarine Squadron was formed (HMA Submarines *Otway* and *Oxley*).

Our intentions, subject to the usual delays with Governmental approval, Treasury, etc, are

- (a) to keep the three cruisers in the present state and do no more half-hearted modernisation;
- (b) to modernise the three Tribals by putting 4" HA LA armament Mk. VI directors, Fly plane, etc.;
- (c) to convert the Q's to escort vessels, full modernisation.<sup>1</sup>

We re-establish the Royal Australian Naval Reserve on 1st January, 1950, using war-experienced RANR Officers and ratings as instructors.

The UK planners are here at present and no major snags have shown up. I hope their visit will advance matters a long way.

All Australia was very bucked about *Amethyst* – a good show.<sup>2</sup> I was surprised we did not get a request for some assistance at Hong Kong but gather that there were some advances made on the Dr. Evatt plane that never got to us.

The coal strike here continues to disrupt industry, including the destroyer programme. I hope it's a fight to the finish this time. The Navy had the pleasure of unloading the *Haligonian Duke* here in Melbourne last week, and there may be more work ahead for us.<sup>3</sup>

### 23. *Fraser to Collins*

5 September 1949

Thank you very much for your interesting letter of 5th August. You will see my remarks about Farncomb in a separate letter.

<sup>1</sup>HA/LA (High Angle/Low Angle) meant that the gun and ammunition could be used to fire against aircraft or surface targets. Four of the five RAN Q class destroyers were converted to anti-submarine warfare frigates during the period 1953–57.

<sup>2</sup>HMS *Amethyst* was sent up the Yangtse River in April 1949 to support British interests during the Chinese Civil War. She was damaged by Communist Chinese gunfire. Despite RN efforts to suppress the Communist artillery *Amethyst* was unable to escape and forced to remain anchored in the Yangtse under threat of further bombardment. After three months of unsuccessful negotiations *Amethyst* made a high speed and fortunate break out in July 1949. See Eric J. Grove, *From Vanguard to Trident: British Naval Policy since World War II* (London, 1987), pp. 128–34.

<sup>3</sup>The 1949 Coal Strike was one of the most bitter strikes in Australian history. It was in part ended because the Government brought in the Army to continue some mining operations. The Miners' Federation received very little support from other unions; however, one which did support their case was the Waterside Workers Federation. The RAN's contribution is not well known and was concurrent with that of the Army. The strike ended on 15 August. See Phillip Deery, *Labour in Conflict: The 1949 coal strike* (Sydney, 1978).

2. I quite understand how you are placed with regard the proposed exchange of small ships.
3. The position as regards the wives of the 'ex-RN's' is a difficult one for you, and I sympathise with your difficulties which will not diminish when you have to run your village of 'pre-fabs' I'm afraid.
4. I was much interested to know of your plans for modernisation and conversion of the RAN, and for the re-establishment of the RANR. On the limited financial provision, by which I know you are restricted (as we are), I think your intentions are very sound.
5. Thank you for your kind remarks about *Amethyst* – we had an anxious time over her, but the outcome was most heartening to us as to you. I'm sorry she couldn't go to Australia, but I'm sure you understand the difficulties.
6. I have just received the kind signal you made about the planning team, and am so glad you found them useful. I think a lot of good will come from the visit.
7. I am afraid we made little progress on the Security Question and now I see the Prime Minister has suggested bringing in German scientists but I presume this is on the industrial side.

Best of luck to you and so many thanks for all your assistance.

#### 24. *Fraser to Collins*

5 September 1949

Thank you for your letter of 5th August about Rear Admiral Farncomb.

2. I agree with the opinions expressed in 1944 as regards desirability of his having air experience, and also some kind of Admiralty administrative experience before he relieves you but I think that he should be able to learn all he needs in a year spent in the United Kingdom.
3. This time would, I think, be best spent if he were to do a two month course in Air matters, which would be arranged by the Fifth Sea Lord. This might be followed by a Senior Officer's War Course at Greenwich and then some months in the Admiralty during which he could have an office with

a roving commission to 'sit in' on high level committee meetings, Chief of Staff briefing meetings, with periodic talks with members of the Board.

## 25. *Fraser to Collins*

6 January 1950

You remember we talked at Greenwich about the fitting of the steam catapult in the *Majestic* and we were rather worried because we had not informed you that this development was underway, which meant that until the steam catapult was fitted the Light Fleet would not be able to operate our projected day fighters.

The position has not changed, but the question of the cost of installing the steam catapult has come up, since we have to fulfil our general agreement to you that we will keep you posted about costs.

The official letter is ready to go, and I have agreed with our financial people, a propos the steam catapult, in their assumption that you will pay for it if and when it is fitted in the *Majestic*, in the same way as you have already agreed to pay for it in the *Sydney*.

I think that this is fair enough because at the time of the original agreement about these carriers in 1948 the possibility of having to fit a steam catapult had not even been thought of; because it cannot be fitted during construction (which includes modernisation as far as possible); and because in any case it will be something like 1954–55 before it is ready to be fitted in either your or our Carriers.

To make quite sure though that there is no misunderstanding, I have recommended that you should be asked in the official letter whether you think it is fair to treat the fitting of the steam catapult as an alteration and addition and to pay for it as such, as we want to be quite certain not to cut across you again.

Thank you so much for helping us over the HDML's for Hong Kong and all the trouble you have taken.<sup>1</sup>

Good luck to you for the New Year

## 26. *Collins to Fraser*

26 January 1950

Thank you for your letter of 6th January (No. 27/50) telling me of your opinion concerning the financial liability for the steam catapult in

<sup>1</sup>HDML (Harbour Defence Motor Launch).

*Majestic*. I agree entirely that we should pay for it as an addition fitted after construction just as we shall pay for the one in *Sydney*.

In 1948 (Admiralty Letter MO 1401/48 of 16th August, 1948) Their Lordships fixed a figure of £500,000 for the cost of modernisation of *Majestic*: modernisation including modification of the catapult and since the catapult will be replaced and not modified, we feel that the cost of replacement should be reduced by whatever portion of the £500,000 that covered the modification. However, this is a matter that can be worked out in detail by the financial experts when the official letter is received here.

There is good news from USA regarding classified information and I hope that the making of confidential matter available to us is only the forerunner of a complete removal of the restrictions.<sup>1</sup>

Manpower remains our main trouble and I have reduced the engagement to 6 years from 1st January in the hope of getting more volunteers. Our numbers are now steady at just over 10,000. Reserve training started on 1st January and we have had a good response, including 100 Reservists who volunteered as instructional staff and have done 14 days' training in instructional duties. Seagoing training is being rushed, including a party of Reservists in HMAS *Labuan* doing the annual Antarctic relief trip.<sup>2</sup>

I have told our NLO that the Government would welcome the offer of the Q's as gift destroyers. We are taking two in hand forthwith for conversion to fast frigates. They will, of course, in common with all RAN ships, be available by mutual agreement for employment anywhere if the threat in the ANZAM area proves slight. But I think you will agree that the size and defence requirements of the ANZAM area are rather frightening when one considers the resources available. We are also taking in hand one tribal [*sic*] at a time to modernise the AS capabilities of these vessels.

We had a very useful combined exercise period with the RNZN in October and November and next month the Australian Fleet proceeds to New Zealand waters for a return match. The RN submarines are worth a guinea a box.

<sup>1</sup>Despite the US-imposed restrictions, the RAN continued to ask for and received information from the USN on many diverse subjects including Shipyard Management publications and Smoke Making Equipment. Although this was obviously not in the same category as the 'confidential matter' (probably signals intelligence) Collins was referring to, it does indicate that the flow of information was not completely cut off after the 1948 revelations of KGB spies in the Department of External Affairs. See Request for Publications dated 11 June 1948, NARA, RG19, Box 492, File EF13-45/A8-3, and Request for information regarding Smoke Making Equipment dated 26 May 1949, NARA, RG19, Box 439, File EF13-45/A8-3.

<sup>2</sup>HMAS *Labuan* made two trips, one each to Heard Is and Macquarie Is, with supplies for the Australian National Antarctic Research Expedition (ANARE) establishments on those islands.

The new Prime Minister made a most heartening speech a few days ago at the annual Ex-Naval Men's Association meeting.<sup>1</sup> He stressed the importance of Sea Power to the British Commonwealth in no mean terms and his speech got good publicity. I think they will introduce compulsory service which will strain our resources rather but we intend to take only about 500 to 1,000 per annum. Nothing is definite but it appears to be a few months' continuous training and then some years in the RANR doing the usual reserve training.

Many thanks for your good wishes and all your help.

## 27. *Collins to Fraser*

27 January 1950

Just after I posted my letter of yesterday, Commodore Willoughby, the Fourth Naval Member, came to me with information from the Australian Naval Liaison Officer in London that all existing RN Light Fleet Carriers were to be scrapped or laid up in a low category of reserve, the inference being that as a type they were finished. The letter mentioned that D. of P.<sup>2</sup> stated that you gave me this information at the meeting last April. As I recall it was made clear at the meeting that a suitable catapult had not yet been designed and, if we decided to go ahead with *Majestic* we took the risk of it being impracticable to devise a catapult that would do the job. On the other hand it was hoped that one could be designed. After discussion I agreed to go ahead with *Majestic* in the hope that a catapult would be forthcoming. As I recollect my hopes were buoyed up by the fact that the RN Light Fleet Carriers would also require the device, so it was not a unique affair required by our ships.<sup>3</sup>

If the report that the existing RN Light Fleets are finished is correct it is most disturbing news, as we do not want to be saddled with a type that has been discarded. Should any mention of this get to the Press in the United Kingdom it would be disastrous.

Willoughby discussed this with Pizey before he left for the United Kingdom and has sent him a brief which sets out our views.

I should be most grateful if you could find time to talk this matter over with him when he sees you on arrival.

<sup>1</sup>Robert Gordon Menzies, Australian Prime Minister, 1939–41 and 1949–66.

<sup>2</sup>Director of Plans.

<sup>3</sup>Collins' recollections are supported by the minutes of the meetings. The minutes do not, however, state that the light fleet carriers would definitely be maintained by the RN. See TNA, ADM 205/72.

**28. Signal, Admiralty to Naval Board**

10 February 1950

101931Z February

Personal for First Naval Member from First Sea Lord.

Your letter of 27th January,

2. Present Admiralty plan is that as ships of *Hermes* class complete they will replace the *Colossus* class in the Future Fleets.
3. Consideration will then have to be given to the future of the *Colossus* class. Current thought is that we should retain those ships in Reserve for employment in war in an A/S Role for which they would be well suited. Financial restrictions preclude our operating them in peace time nor can we afford the aircraft for them in addition to those required for the two new Fleet Carriers and the *Hermes* class.
4. You will see therefore that the Admiralty by no means regards this type as finished and you have evidently been misinformed.
5. For financial reasons also, the three remaining *Majestics* will not be completed as carriers.
6. *Hermes* class will be fitted with the steam catapult provided it proves successful, but as you will understand from the foregoing it is not our intention to fit these catapults in the *Colossus* class.
7. The problem of providing A/S aircraft in sufficient numbers for Light Fleet carriers is being considered by us now as you will see from Admiralty letter M. 02260/49 of 18th January 1950.

**29. Collins to Fraser**

27 March 1950

Thank you for your personal Top Secret message 101931 February which I received about the same time as Admiralty letter M.060384/49 of 13th January, 1950.

I am enclosing a brief memorandum setting out the position as we see it with our present knowledge and would be most grateful if the Naval Staff would examine and comment on it.

Briefly (for I know you are troubled by many matters of great importance) it seems to me that, in view of the complications of fitting the steam catapult, we must appreciate the situation afresh, bearing in mind the need for two Carriers and the importance of AS operations.

In April, 1949, I indicated that we wanted the steam catapult in our Light Fleets but that we were prepared to go ahead with *Melbourne* in the knowledge that it might prove impracticable to devise a catapult to do the job. It now seems that owing to a number of design difficulties, the catapult will not be ready till 1954/55 (Admiralty letter M. 060384/49, paragraph 17). The attached memorandum shows repercussions of this delay upon the RAN. It is apparent that, if we fit the steam catapult, our Carriers will be in dockyard hands, on and off, for several years.

Although, up to date, I have maintained that our carriers should be capable of operating the latest jet fighters, I am now beginning to have my doubts whether this ideal is practicable. In the old days we bought *Australia* and *Canberra*, two trade protection Cruisers, and accepted that they were not fitted with 15" guns and armour. Is it not logical of us to provide now two *Majestic* Class Carriers and accept that they are not Fleet Carriers, nor even *Hermes* Class? In the ANZAM Area, their primary role would be trade protection in which AS operations play a major part and for which they are well suited. They could operate fighters that would be a match for unescorted bombers of present long range types. If our Carriers were to be employed in an area within radius of fast enemy shore-based aircraft, then our carriers would have to form part of a force with other Carriers armed with the appropriate fighters.

I am now contemplating something on the following lines:—

- (a) *Melbourne* to be completed as planned, modernised, with the best catapult available at the time.
- (b) *Sydney* to be taken in hand for modernisation (less steam catapult) when *Melbourne* commissions. (It is unlikely that we shall be able to man both Carriers in 1952).

Thus we shall have two *Majestic* Class, modernised but without steam catapult, in 1954, by which time I hope we shall be able to man them. I understand these ships would be able to operate all Naval aircraft (including A/S type GR17/45) except the most modern jet fighters but I should be grateful if you would ask the Staff to include in their comments on the attached memorandum the latest forecast of all the types of future

Naval aircraft which will be able to operate from a modernised *Majestic* without steam catapult.

If, by any chance, a type of steam catapult is devised in due course which could be fairly easily fitted in place of the existing one, then we could reconsider our decision and fit it.

Before approaching Cabinet on this matter, I should be most grateful for your comments on these proposals from the subject of –

- (a) Australian requirements,
- (b) Australia's share in Commonwealth defence,
- (c) Commitments so far entered into regarding the steam catapult.

If you think we should fit the steam catapult, I shall think again. If you agree that the modernised ships without steam catapult would meet the case, I shall have to convince the Cabinet accordingly and somehow get round the assurance in Attlee's message to Chifley (Com. Relations 30 of 30th January, 1948) that *Sydney* would be able to operate all aircraft that will be in service in the middle fifties and possibly well beyond that date.

The request for the five Q Class Destroyers on the assurance that they will be converted to fast frigates has been held up in our Treasury, but we have started on *Quadrant* at Williamstown Dockyard and *Quality* in Sydney in anticipation.

I learnt only today that our Treasury have now agreed and I have initiated action to have a letter addressed by Mr. Menzies to Mr. Attlee asking for the ships.

### HMA Ships *Sydney* and *Melbourne*

Function: Modernisation.

Policy

#### 1. The situation regarding RAN Carriers seems to be:–

- (a) *Melbourne* (i) To be delivered in Mid 1952.
- (*Majestic*) (ii) Her manning will be difficult, if not impossible at that time.
- (iii) When delivered – She will be fully modernised, except for steam catapult.
  - Catapult fitted will be BH3.
  - It will not be possible during building to allow for easy replacement of BH3 when steam catapult is available.

– A very rough guess of the time required to replace BH3 by steam catapult is 6–12 months. This replacement could be undertaken in Australia.

- (iv) Steam Catapult is not expected to be available till 1954/55.
- (b) *Sydney*
- (i) Requires modernisation.
  - (ii) Modernisation without steam catapult would require about 12–18 months refit and could be undertaken in Australia.
  - (iii) Could fit steam catapult when it became available in 1954/55.
  - (iv) Full modernisation, with fitting of steam catapult, would require a refit which is believed to take 1½–2 years. The refit could be undertaken in Australia.

2. It is understood that the capabilities of a *Majestic* modernised but without steam catapult would be:–

- (a) Operation of all present and future types of piston-engined Naval aircraft.
- (b) Operation of GR17/45, which is the future type of Naval A/S aircraft.

3. A *Majestic* modernised, but without steam catapult would be unable to operate future Naval jet fighters, with the probable exception of the *Venom* version of the *Vampire*, if this is developed for Naval use.

4. If fitted with steam catapult, it is understood that a modernised *Majestic* could probably operate, in addition to the types mentioned in paragraph 2 (a) and (b) above, only the *Seahawk* and *Attacker* (Naval jet fighters) (i.e., it would be unable to operate the N.9 and subsequent jet fighters).

*Note:* By 'operation', in paragraphs 2 to 4 above, is meant the ability of operating fully, i.e. launching and landing on with no natural wind and capacity to strike down and stow in the hanger.

5. The programmes for *Sydney* and *Melbourne* during the next few years might be:—

- (a) Full modernisation (i.e., including fitting of steam catapult) of *Sydney* to be started in latter half of 1954, when steam catapult should be available. *Melbourne* to be fitted with steam catapult when it is available.
- or (b) *Sydney* can be taken in hand for modernisation, but without steam catapult, when *Melbourne* is delivered; both *Sydney* and *Melbourne* to be fitted with steam catapult when it is available.
- or (c) As for (b) above, but fitting of steam catapult will not be undertaken in either Ship.

6. Under the three possible programmes stated above, the periods during which *Sydney* and *Melbourne* would be operational (dashes) or under refit (crosses) can be shown as follows:<sup>1</sup>

	1952	1953	1954	1955	1956	1957
(a) Sydney	-----	-----	-----XXXX	XXXXXXXXXX	XXXXX-----	-----
Melbourne	ooooo	-----	-----	-----XXXXX	XXXXX-----	XXXXX-----
(b) Sydney	-----XXXXX	XXXXXXXXXX	-----	-----XXXXX	XXXXX-----	-----
Melbourne	ooooo	-----	-----XXXXX	XXXXX-----	-----	-----
(c) Sydney	-----XXXXX	XXXXXXXXXX	-----	-----	-----	-----
Melbourne	ooooo	-----	-----	-----	-----	-----

7. It can be seen, therefore, that, in the FIVE YEARS between June 1952 and June 1957, TWO carriers would be operational for only 18 months under programme (a) and (b) involving fitting of steam catapult, whereas, under programme (c), TWO carriers would be operational for three of the five years of the period. Furthermore, it can be seen that, if *Sydney* is taken in hand for modernisation, without steam catapult, in mid-1952, when *Melbourne* is delivered, the TWO carriers will be operational and with maximum capability for A/S operations, by the end of 1953. Undertaking the partial modernisation of *Sydney* in mid-1952, when *Melbourne* is delivered, may be a convenient means of having to lay up the Ship owing to manning of the two Carriers not being possible.

<sup>1</sup>This table is a reconstruction of a black and white photocopy. The original correspondence refers to the operational period as being red dashes and in refit as black dashes. In this reconstruction the operational periods are dashes and the refit periods are crosses. The text of the letter has been changed to reflect this. The time between *Melbourne*'s delivery and becoming operational (second half of 1952), probably red dashes in the original, has been represented as 'o' here to distinguish it from being available (i.e. not in refit) but not fully operational.

If this modernisation were undertaken in Australia, the opportunity of transporting *Melbourne*'s crew to UK in *Sydney* would be missed.

8. Other factors to be considered when deciding whether or not steam catapult should be fitted in *Sydney* and *Melbourne* are:—

- (a) Considerable importance is being attached to A/S warfare in the RN and USN.
- (b) The primary role foreseeable for *Sydney* and *Melbourne* is trade protection, in which the whole range of A/S operations will play the major part.
- (c) The fighter defence capacity of the Ships would be required to deal only with an occasional light raid when, as likely as not, the enemy aircraft would not be of a very high performance type.
- (d) The Ships are not designed – whether or not they can operate jet fighters – to enter areas in which there is a threat of heavy air attack, *relying only on their own fighter defences*.
- (e) Should *Sydney* and/or *Melbourne* be called into (say) the Mediterranean where there will be a Submarine threat and a threat of heavy air attack, then it could be made clear that the role of the Ship-s [*sic*] is primarily A/S. By partially relieving faster and larger Carriers of the A/S task, presumably the fighter component of these Carriers could be correspondingly increased. The main fighter defence of a force including *Sydney* and/or *Melbourne*, which might be subject to heavy air attack, would thus be provided by other Carriers, whose complements consisted largely of (jet) fighters.
- (f) When we have only 2 Light Fleet Carriers which, as likely as not, will be operating singly, there is some advantage of having a more or less all-purpose fighter rather than a very high speed jet type.

9. In these days when the present cold war might, at any time, be translated into a shooting war, it would be very unwise to accept *Melbourne* without the best catapult available. It would be equally unwise to defer modernisation (without steam catapult) of *Sydney* until 1954 and to expect that the Ship could then be surrendered for a refit which would last 1½–2 years.

### Proposals

10. It is proposed that a policy decision be given to state the functions of *Sydney* and *Melbourne* as:-

- (a) The primary function of *Sydney* and *Melbourne* will be trade protection, in which the whole range of A/S operations will play a part.
- (b) The secondary functions of *Sydney* and *Melbourne* will be fighter defence against attack outside the radius of fast shore-based aircraft and, within this limitation, strike, reconnaissance, Army co-operation, &c.

11. Assuming Admiralty confirm that the steam catapult will not be ready till 1954/55 and that Admiralty confirm that the capabilities of the *Majestic* Class modernised and with or without steam catapult are as stated in paragraphs 2, 3 and 4 above, it is proposed that the policy as regards taking over *Melbourne* (*Majestic*) and the modernisation of *Sydney* and *Melbourne* be stated as:-

- (a) *Melbourne* is to be delivered with the best catapult available at the time; (presumably BH5).
- (b) Steam catapult is not an essential requirement for *Sydney* or *Melbourne* so far as can be foreseen and therefore its fitting in either Ship will not be planned;
- (c) Full modernisation (except catapult) of *Sydney* will be started as soon as *Melbourne* can be taken over.

### **30. Fraser to Collins**

27 April 1950

Thank you for your letter of 27th March. I am very much interested in the change of policy which you have in mind, and I find that the Naval Staff is in general agreement and welcome it, as I do myself.

2. This letter contains my own views and those of the Naval Staff. You are perfectly at liberty to use it as such, but it cannot be regarded as an expression of Board Opinion. If you would like such an opinion, we would of course be glad to send you an official Admiralty letter in reply to an official request.

3. You ask for my comments on your proposals before you approach your Cabinet. The first thing to be considered is Australia's share in Commonwealth defence. The Admiralty conception of this is that we should rely upon the RAN and the RNZN to supply the force required for the defence of sea communications in the ANZAM area. This would entail each Navy maintaining a balanced force, according to its means, for trade protection. The actual threat, from enemy sea and air forces, in this area, is likely to be slight. We hope, therefore, that, as in the past, once Home Defence and the sea communications of the area have been secured, you will make your naval forces available to cooperate with the remaining Commonwealth and Allied Navies in other parts of the world.

4. In the light of the above, the primary task of the carrier of the RAN should, in our view, be trade protection. We hope that, if not required for this purpose in the ANZAM area, the carriers would be available for a similar role elsewhere, for example, in the Pacific in conjunction with US forces, or in the Atlantic in conjunction with our own A/S forces. The Naval Staff view therefore, of Australian carrier requirements is that they should be armed with, and able to operate:—

- (a) The latest A/S aircraft.
- (b) Fighters for trade protection, which need not necessarily be the latest type jet fighter, but should be a match for unescorted bombers of the long range type or long range reconnaissance aircraft.

5. If it would help you when approaching your Cabinet, my personal opinion is that, of the two most important roles for which naval aviation is being cast – firstly trade protection, and secondly defence of the Fleet and convoys against heavy escorted enemy air attacks – the former which is the one you have in mind for your carriers, is the more important.

6. As regards the steam catapult, I am advised that you have entered into no commitment from which you could not withdraw without financial expenditure.

7. Turning to the more detailed questions mentioned in the enclosure to your letter, the Naval Staff recommends:—

- (a) That you adopt the policy suggested in paragraph 11 (a), (b) and (c), except that the BH5 catapult would not be necessary, since the BH3 should meet your requirements.

- (b) That you rely on the GR 17, or other A/S aircraft to be used by the RN, as the future RAN A/S aircraft.<sup>1</sup>
- (c) With regard to the future RAN fighter to replace the Sea Fury, we are not yet in a position to give you final advice. Assuming that the steam catapult will not be fitted, the *Melbourne* and *Sydney* (when the latter is modernised to the former's standard), would be able to operate with their BH3 catapults, Venom day/night jet fighter, subject to the following conditions:–
  - (i) With catapult only; ship steaming at 22 knots, requiring 7 knots natural wind for an aircraft in the overload condition, or 2 knots natural wind in normal weight condition.
  - (ii) With catapult in combination with RATOG; ship steaming at 22 knots with no natural wind, even in the overload condition.<sup>2</sup>

Note: This system of launching by catapult and RATOG at the same time is still under development, but the reports are very hopeful.

8. I should mention that we have not finally decided to develop the Venom for the RN. At present the Naval Staff is almost certain to recommend that we do. Provisionally, therefore, I suggest you should regard this aircraft as the RAN's future fighter to replace the Sea Fury.

9. As a matter of interest, there is also the promising possibility that the Seahawk will be operable from *Melbourne* and *Sydney*, taking off by combination of catapult (BH3) and RATOG. We shall not be certain for some time, however, whether this will be practicable. In any case the Naval Staff believe that in certain respects, the Venom will be a better fighter than the Seahawk, since it will be a dual purpose day/night fighter.

10. I will keep you informed of the decisions we make whether to develop the Venom for the RN. The present estimated cost per aircraft is of the order of £47,000.

<sup>1</sup>The GR 17 was probably Admiralty specification N17/45; the Fairey Gannet was eventually selected and these flew from HMAS *Melbourne* from her commissioning in 1956 until they were replaced by Grumman Trackers in 1967.

<sup>2</sup>RATOG – Rocket Assisted Take Off Gear.

11. I am glad the question of the 'Q' class destroyers has now been cleared up and has made 'an honest man' of you in your conversions of *Quadrant* and *Quality*!<sup>1</sup>

My very best wishes to you. I am delighted that we correspond.

31. *Collins to Fraser*

17 July 1950

Your letter of 27th April was most welcome with its reassurance that the views expressed in my letter of 27th March in regard to our carriers were generally in line with those of Admiralty. The new 4th Naval Member, Pedder,<sup>2</sup> has however now produced unofficial information that the steam catapult looks like being a success and is proceeding much more quickly than has been imagined when I last wrote. He suggests that it may even be suitable for Majestic Class and be ready for fitting before she completes. If this is confirmed officially, as he thinks possible, I feel we must think again, so I have put in abeyance my previous decision not to fit the steam catapult to our carriers until the situation is clearer. I am telling you of this in case the staff may think we are definitely no longer interested in the steam catapult.

The Cabinet yesterday approved plans for National service. This is a mixed blessing so far as the Navy is concerned, but it will improve, in due course, our pool of reservists for mobilisation. They were shocked when I told them I should have to pay off a destroyer and a running frigate to provide the nucleus crews for five frigates for training the national service men and for the first time are now aware of the importance of recruiting for the *permanent* forces. They have promised a ministerial high power campaign to back up our recruiting. We still are just holding our own at about 10,000, although the Korea affair has given an impetus to the applications. We are taking only 500 a year National service men for a start, working up to 1000 a year. They are to do 4 months' continuous training the first year in two entries, and thereafter a fortnight a year for four more years. As you see they will be only a training commitment but, as I said, will prove useful on mobilisation.

<sup>1</sup>It appears that the RAN started modification of ships the RN/UK had only lent them and then asked for permission to modernise them. The UK ended up giving the ships to Australia.

<sup>2</sup>Cdre (later VA Sir) Arthur R. Pedder, RN, was loaned to the RAN as 4th Naval Member, 1950–52. He returned to the RN to serve as ACNS (Warfare), Flag Officer Aircraft Carriers and NATO Commander Naval Forces North.

We are also to start the WRANS again which may help us a little with our manning problem.<sup>1</sup>

I was glad we were able to put *Bataan* and *Shoalhaven* on the job in Korea so quickly and was delighted to see the reaction by the UK Government.<sup>2</sup> Let's hope the business is cleared up in reasonable time and is not the 'preparative' for worse events.

### 32. Fraser to Collins

12 September 1950

Your letter of 17th July, 1950, came, just as I was preparing to write to you again about the Steam Catapult. As Pedder learned before leaving home, progress has been quicker, and this letter is to give you the latest information.

2. It now seems possible that we could offer you a Steam Catapult for fitting in *Majestic* at Barrow-in-Furness before completion, providing you can accept a delay of about 8 months. We have not yet, however, started trials on this Catapult, and the production position is not yet entirely clear. Consequently, we cannot send you an official offer at present, but this information may affect your views on whether you will require a steam Catapult. Later on, providing all goes well and we follow this up with an official offer, we should need to ask you for a fairly quick reply, in view of *Majestic*'s present completion date.

3. I have not altered the opinion in my letter of 27th April that a Steam Catapult would not be essential for a Majestic Class Carrier engaged on trade protection. There is every reason to believe that both the GR17 and the Venom could be operated without it.

4. However, it would offer, at a rough estimated cost to Australia of £150,000, the following advantages:—

<sup>1</sup>WRANS – Women's Royal Australian Naval Service. See Alison Vincent, "Women have come to stay": the demobilisation and reintroduction of the Australian women's services, 1941–1955', BA(Hons) Thesis, University of NSW/Australian Defence Force Academy (1992) and K. L. Spurling, 'The Women's Royal Australian Naval Service: A Study In Discrimination 1939–1960', MA Thesis, University of NSW, Duntroon (1988).

<sup>2</sup>Prior to the start of the Korean War HMAS *Shoalhaven* was serving with the British Commonwealth Occupation Forces in Japan and HMAS *Bataan* was en route to Japan to relieve *Shoalhaven*. For a complete account see Robert O'Neill, *Australia in the Korean War 1950–53: Volume II Combat Operations* (Canberra, 1985).

- (a) The ship would not have to steam at full speed, in order to launch the Venom in conditions of no natural wind.
- (b) RATOG would not be required; there would therefore be a saving in cost of the rockets and in stowage space.
- (c) The Seahawk could be used, should you ever decide to operate this aircraft.

The Steam Catapult would not, in itself, enable the later fighter projects, such as the N9/47 and the N14/49, to be operated, since this would require the deck and lifts to be strengthened to stand 30,000 lbs.<sup>1</sup>

5. If you decide that *Sydney* should come to the UK for modernisation after *Melbourne* leaves it would probably be possible to fit her with Steam Catapult, provided that she remained in the UK until the end of 1956.

6. [pen script addition] My best wishes to you and we so much appreciate all the help Australia is giving in the Far East.

### 33. *Collins to Fraser*

6 October 1950

The question of fitting the steam catapult to our Light Fleet Carriers was examined again on receipt of your letter of 12th September. I feel that the advantages outweigh the delay of some 8 months and so have decided that we shall say 'yes' to the official offer when received. I have got Ministerial approval and we can find the money, so there should be no delay.

2. The present intention is to send *Sydney* to the United Kingdom for modernisation when *Melbourne* commissions but I am disappointed to find that she will take till 1956.<sup>2</sup> We thought two years, i.e. until mid. 1955 would suffice. Perhaps the staff could put in a bid for a steam catapult for *Sydney* now so that we shall not be delayed on that account.

3. Our recruiting campaign, led by the Prime Minister, is getting into its stride and we have already more than doubled entries for the permanent

<sup>1</sup>The N9/47 specification became the Scimitar day fighter and the N114/47 specification became the Sea Vixen all weather fighter. Neither saw service in the RAN, which operated the Sea Venom in *Melbourne* until 1967 when they were replaced by the A-4 Skyhawk.

<sup>2</sup>*Sydney* never received a steam catapult or modernisation to the same standard as *Melbourne*.

Navy (on six year engagement). The new pay makes the task easier. An Able Seaman now gets £1 per day, all round, plus uniform allowance, marriage allowance, etc. Officers have not had a corresponding rise although they have been increased a little. A Captain now gets 79/- per day on promotion and a Rear-Admiral £2,500 per year consolidated. The RN acceptance of a lower rate for Naval Lieutenants and Lieutenant Commanders than Army Captains and Majors caused us trouble but eventually we compromised and got parity for Lieutenant-Commander-Major on promotion, and for the Navy Lieutenant over 2 years and the Army Captain on promotion. It remains to be seen whether we reach our target of 15,173 officers and men (a 50% increase) and 7580 Reserves by June.

4. I am fairly happy about our A/S preparations, particularly as I do not expect the 1st XI to be sent to our waters. With the 3 Tribals being modernised for A/S, the 5 Q's being converted to fast A/S frigates, 12 Frigates (18 knots), 2 Battles brand new and four *Darings* building, we have something to work with. We also have 32 World War II Corvettes (called Australian Mine Sweepers) which would be useful for local defence of ports (12-14 knots).<sup>1</sup> I hope you agree that this is about in balance.

5. I am not so content about our minesweeping preparations. We have the 32 AMS referred to above (they are two purpose vessels) which are quite good for moored mines and will be able to deal with magnetic and acoustic in over 17 fathoms when we get the latest equipment. We have nothing of the type of inshore minesweeper nor have I been able as yet to get things moving in building these vessels. You will remember that it was hoped we might build some for the United Kingdom. I gather that the design is now being finalised so I shall return to the attack. I am asking Admiralty for an experienced practical minesweeping officer and intend the National Service men to spend their 2 months at sea in minesweepers learning the job, together with the Reservists. It will be a long time before we can have an active service minesweeping flotilla. Our only mine expert is being sent to UK to get up to date.

6. I should like confirmation from you that I am right in not contemplating anything new in the way of Cruisers. We are modernising *Hobart*, keeping *Australia* as a training cruiser and have given in on *Shropshire*. At some appropriate time she will be scrapped.

<sup>1</sup>AMS, Australian Minesweepers, were the *Bathurst* class corvettes.

7. Naval Aviation is I feel in balance. A pity we cannot get both Carriers running earlier but there is no alternative.
8. Boom defences of Ports in Australia are not bad, we have the nets, buoys, moorings, etc. for all defended ports practically completed and have the equipment for some, loop mines and indicator loops. We are still struggling with other devices. Outside the Mainland we have nothing, and are setting about the Boom for Manus (Seeadler Harbour). I hear rumours that the Singapore Planners are sounding US on the possibility of providing their Boom defences. We have declared that the ANZAM Area is vital to us and Singapore is in the area, so we have got to do some hard thinking. If we are to equip Army Divisions for the Middle East, logically we must face up to such things but I am doubtful of the reaction of the Government. However this is all very much in the preliminary stages.
9. The Singapore and New Zealand planners are making good progress and we soon should have completed the Plan for the Defence of the Sea Communications in the ANZAM Area.
10. We still have our two Surveying ships immobilised (and one on loan to New Zealand). The Surveying Service is being kept alive by boat surveys. There is much to be done and I want to get at least one sloop back in commission as soon as I can get the hands.
11. We are negotiating for a Fast Fleet Tanker to be built in Australia. The rest of the Fleet Train will be requisitioned ships.
12. The Shore establishments, schools, etc. are active but the housing shortage remains the difficulty. We cannot get our WRANS going until overworked 'Works and Housing' recondition the WRANS quarters at Flinders Naval Depot and build quarters at *Harman* where we urgently need them for special telegraphist duties.
13. I hope you will not have found the foregoing tedious but I wanted to give you an outline of what we are up to out here in the hope that you might advise or throw new light on our preparations.
14. We shall have our jubilee celebrations next year and have, in addition to our old friends the New Zealand Squadron with whom we are very close, two Pakistan and one Indian ship. Combined exercises will take place in February after the Australia Day celebrations in Sydney. The US

are sending a ship for Coral Sea week (May) if the situation allows. I am hoping that the Korea business may have subsided by next year and that we shall have some ships from the FE Station down to join in the fun and the exercises.

15. I had a private note from Admiral Brind in which he offers to come down here after relief if there is a requirement.<sup>1</sup> It would be a very good idea as we have had heavy artillery in F. M. Slim, US Admiral Radford, US General Kenny in the last few months but no senior RN visitors.<sup>2</sup> I shall take it up and only mention it now to give you the background if an invitation is issued.

Please excuse the length of this letter.

#### 34. *Fraser to Collins*

13 December 1950

Many thanks for your most interesting letter of 6th October. It arrived while I was in Washington and I must apologise for the delay in answering.

For ease of reference, I will refer to paragraphs of your letter wherever I have specific comments to make.

I hope you will continue these letters – it is splendid to hear how things are going in all your fields of activity.

#### The Light Fleet Carriers

2. I must start by giving you some bad news. I am afraid that the completion date of *Majestic*, with steam catapult fitted, has now been retarded to January, 1954. The date without steam catapult is now September, 1953.

It is more than unfortunate that these delays have again to be reported, as Admiralty Letter (M. 060384/49 of October 26th) has only recently been sent and especially after all your great patience with a frustrating series of events.

<sup>1</sup>Adm Sir Patrick Brind, RN was the C-in-C Far East Station.

<sup>2</sup>Field Marshal Sir William Slim, Chief of the Imperial General Staff, 1948–52 and then the Gov Gen of Australia 1953–60. Admiral Arthur Radford was the US C-in-C Pacific in 1949–53 and subsequently US Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, 1953–57. Gen George C. Kenny was the Commander of Allied Air Forces under Gen Douglas MacArthur in the South West Pacific Area during the Second World War.

The delays are due to a combination of circumstances with which I will not burden you, but which have equally affected us.

The only advantage of the new dates is that they will allow alteration of the AVGAS<sup>1</sup> stowage and the encasing of the boiler room air system as a measure of ABC defence.<sup>2</sup>

3. If you decide still to accept the steam catapult for *Majestic*, and I hope you will, we can offer another for *Sydney* in mid 1954, which is an improvement on the previous date given in the Admiralty Letter quoted above.

The Controller assumes that you will want *Sydney* modernised up to the same standards as *Majestic* and estimates that this will take 2 years. Moreover, if *Sydney* is to be fitted with a steam catapult as early as production allows, she should be taken in hand one year before the catapult is available.

The earliest date of completion of *Sydney*, therefore, would be in mid 1955, though, if you do not send her here for modernisation until the *Majestic* is ready to commission, *Sydney*'s completion date will be January, 1956. The steam catapult programme is very tight and the later programme would probably be safer in the long run.

#### Your paragraph 3

4. I am glad to hear that your recruiting campaign is going well, and I am sure the pay increases, which sound excellent, should have their effect.

I read your Prime Minister's broadcasts on defence with great interest and thought that they showed a very clear appreciation of the general situation.

At home here, Naval recruiting is going reasonably well and we hope, when the pension question has been settled satisfactorily, that re-engagements also will increase.

#### Your paragraph 4

5. I agree with you that your A/S force appears well balanced and should be able to compete with the situation. The Naval Staff have one question – that you should try to fit your 18 knot frigates with 'Squid',

<sup>1</sup>AVGAS – Aviation Gasoline.

<sup>2</sup>ABC – Atomic, Biological and Chemical.

which has proved most satisfactory. We are trying here to re-arm as many Escorts as we can with either 'Squid' or 'Limbo'.<sup>1</sup>

You may not have yet heard that we are being forced to build a rather cheap Escort (called second-rate A/S Escort) on account of the expense of the new A/S Frigate (about 1½M Sterling). This second-rate will cost, we hope, only half the first-rate and will, in general, have the same AS characteristics but lack the armament of the first-rate and will not have quite the speed. They will be suitable for mass production and we are including two prototypes in next year's new construction programme. You may be interested in them as possible eventual replacements for your 18 knot Frigates.

#### Your paragraph 5

6. The question of mine counter measures has been given a great deal of consideration here recently, particularly as the Korean War has yet again shown what a menace the mine can be. Much research and development effort is going into this and we are strengthening the minesweeping training organisation. I am not, however, by any means satisfied with our position at present.

7. I agree with you that you should aim to acquire a balanced minesweeping force and will give you the strongest support for any efforts to build Coastal and Inshore Minesweepers.

The specifications for both these classes have been sent to the UKSLS for your information.

We are investigating now the possibility of fitting the Indian Bathursts with modern magnetic and acoustic gear and it seems probable that this can be done with some sacrifice in top weight.

We will certainly do our best to send you an experienced Minesweeping officer, if you want one, in order to help with training. We are, however, short ourselves at present.

#### Your paragraph 6

8. I agree with you that at present any money for new construction or modernisation should be chiefly devoted to Minesweepers, Escorts and Aviation, in which fields we are all most short.

It would not appear, therefore, that any new Cruisers can be built for some time.

<sup>1</sup>Squid and Limbo (Mk. 10) were anti submarine mortars.

You may, however, like to consider acquiring *Fiji* or *Dido* Cruisers as replacements for *Australia* and *Shropshire*. Some of these ships may be available shortly and your Liaison Officer in London can be given full details, if you want them.

Your paragraph 9

9. I was satisfied with the results of our meetings with the US Chiefs of Staff in Washington. They were forthcoming over planning in the Pacific, as you will by now be aware and, moreover, they gave a firm commitment that the US Navy would guarantee the defence of Australia and New Zealand from invasion.

I feel certain that the forthcoming planning talks with C. in C., Pacific, will be most useful.

Your paragraph 14

10. I join with you in hoping that the Far East situation will allow us to send some ships for your Jubilee celebrations next year. The prospects are at present not good, I am afraid.

The subsequent exercises which you mentioned should be most interesting and I was so pleased to see that you were going to make the Pakistanis and Indians work together with you. I think that anything in this line is excellent and am trying to get C. in C., East Indies, to do the same thing.

I think it would be excellent if Admiral Brind was to pay you a visit after he has been relieved and, from my point of view, I should be very pleased if he went. He could then bring me the latest news from you.

p.s. [pen script addition] I was very pleased to see Farncombe [*sic*] and his wife in Washington and also Armstrong and his wife the other day here.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Capt J. M. Armstrong, RAN. In late 1944 Armstrong took over from the late Capt E. Dechaineaux as CO of HMAS *Australia*. After the war he was selected to command the RAN's first carrier, but was ruled medically unfit for sea. Subsequent appointments included 2nd Naval Member and Australian NLO in Washington.

35. *Collins to Fraser*

8 March 1951

Having returned from Pearl Harbor only a couple of days ago I am rather snowed under but feel I should give you a brief account now of the ANZAM Conference there last week (and at the same time reply to yours of 13th December, 1950). The US Navy did everything to make us comfortable and were most co-operative. Knowing Radford well personally helped me a lot.

2. There were, however, several things that surprised me. The most important was the very different directives we held. Radford got his from CNO in mid November and was able to get the Naval Attache from Melbourne to Pearl and return him to Australia before ours was received. Ours churned its way through the UK High Commissioner to our Prime Minister, to Defence Department and so eventually to me in January. It was unfortunate it took so long as the initiative lay with us and it made us look lukewarm.

3. That was a minor matter. The surprising thing was that the directives were so different. Ours was very wide – discussion on co-ordination of planning between the ANZAM and Pacific Theatres whereas his was confined to discussions on delineating an area of responsibility for convoy escort and routeing, reconnaissance, local defence and anti-submarine warfare, and search and rescue. In the event, as you will see from the Report of the Radford–Collins conference, forwarded to you by UK SLS, we had much wider discussions, but it seemed strange that the UK COS and the US JCOS should have issued such differing directives resulting from a combined meeting.<sup>1</sup>

4. Stranger still was the fact that Radford's information from CNO regarding the 'guarantee' was much wider than that sent to our Prime Minister through the UK High Commissioner. As I recall (he was naturally reluctant to include it in an official document) it was to the effect that the United States *will commit sufficient forces in the Pacific to ensure the security* of Australia and New Zealand in the event of an emergency! The one received by us merely stated that US Navy in the Pacific *would be*

<sup>1</sup>UKSLS (United Kingdom Service Liaison Staff). UKCOS (United Kingdom Chiefs of Staff). USJCOS (United States Joint Chiefs of Staff). For a copy of the *Report of the Radford–Collins Conference* see NARA, RG218, Records of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Geographic File 1951–53, Box 10, File CCS 337 Australia (7-12-50) B.P. Part 1.

*sufficiently strong to deal with any sea-borne threat* to Australia and New Zealand. The Australian COS had already told the government there was no threat from sea-borne invasion and in any event you will see that the guarantee as received by us contained no reference to forces being committed. Radford agreed that he and I should raise this matter unofficially. His version is of course, quite absurd as no such guarantee is possible, neither would any self-respecting nation accept it. It would mean that our Navy was redundant in the ANZAM region.

5. Another interesting feature was that Radford apparently was allowed no discretion in deciding the area. He was told to stand firm on the Ramsey–Collins line and, with a less co-operative personality, we might have reached a deadlock on the first day. I felt that the Western Boundary was really our concern and eventually he signalled CNO Washington and got approval to adopt our line. For the reasons given in the report I agreed to adopt the US Eastern boundary.

6. I am going into all this detail in order to plead for acceptance of the Radford–Collins line as delineating the agreed ANZAM region. If we cannot do so I feel we shall have to have two areas, one the British Commonwealth ANZAM Region and the other for use with the United States for the four maritime purposes referred above. The NZ Chief of Naval Staff, who is mostly concerned, is quite happy about the more westerly line adopted, particularly in view of the guarantee that the US would look after the area in war. I, of course, endorse it wholeheartedly.

7. We made considerable progress in other Naval matters and hope, as a result of the conference, to have our sea communications, sea rescue, reconnaissance, communications, and suchlike problems co-ordinated in good time. Our task was made easier by the completion, just before leaving for the conference, of agreement on the planning level of 'Plans for the Defence of the Sea Communications in the ANZAM Region'.

8. Our Jubilee manoeuvres are going ahead well and we achieved an exercise on first departure from Sydney with an RN submarine attacking a force consisting of Australian, New Zealand, South African, Indian and Pakistan ships. (The two latter quite a victory!). The Indian and South African parted company after 24 hours but at least we got them all together. As you know a Canadian Cruiser is arriving shortly. Between ourselves the least said about the capabilities of the Pakistan Ships the better. They haven't got an idea of fleet work of even the most elementary type, and we have been forced to put an (N) officer on board each as 'Liaison Officer'.

9. Our Naval recruiting is progressing almost exactly at our required rate of 3000 per year and I have planned to place ships in commission in the following priority:—

- (1) Three minesweepers and one frigate for National Service Training. (These have just commissioned.)
- (2) Surveying Ship. (We have no surveying ship in commission and our Hydrographic Branch will die out unless we do something quickly.)
- (3) Minesweepers for Fleet Training.
- (4) Frigates.

We have got the Ship's Company for ANZAC and have no new construction coming forward for some time.

10. The last matter I would like to raise follows on your information regarding delays to *Melbourne*. I have already had initial investigations made at a lower level and had hoped that our Prime Minister would discuss it with you when he was in London. Unfortunately his influenza prevented this. I refer to the possibility of Australia borrowing a Light Fleet Carrier until *Melbourne* is available. We could, we estimate, man her in mid 1952 by which time I gather you may be thinking of paying off some of your Light Fleets. It would be a good thing from the overall defence aspect to have another carrier in commission and would be most welcome to us as it would enable our two Carrier Air Groups to have a carrier each in reasonable time.

11. This letter is already too long and so I will not deal in detail with the other matters dealt with in yours – Squid for Frigates, etc. They can await another letter in due course. Finally just a word of thanks for your decision that *Sydney* should not go to Korea. I am sure it was right.

36. *Collins to Fraser*

2 April 1951

I hope you will excuse another letter so soon after mine of 8th March but this one, which I hope to keep short, concerns the remaining matters in yours of 13th December not dealt with in my previous letter.

### CARRIERS.

2. We have informed Admiralty that we want a steam catapult in *Majestic* and we are about to ask for one for *Sydney* to be fitted on completion of *Melbourne*. Paragraph 10 of my last letter raises the possibility of borrowing a Light Fleet to tide us over. I find now that early '53 would probably be the best date if you have one available then. We would like to keep it till *Sydney* is completed about January, 1956.

### SQUID IN FRIGATES.

3. Our Frigates (which I loosely referred to in my last as 18 knot) are River Class, reputed 20 knot, and eight of them are A/S with Squid, the remaining four being A/A with hedgehog.<sup>1</sup> I am giving consideration to putting squid in the latter but doubt if they will take it.

4. We have Government approval to build 6 First rate Frigates and are already buying the drawings and collecting material but we cannot get really started on these until the yards get clear of the *Darings* (see paragraph 6).

### CRUISERS.

5. After much thought I have decided that we will not at this stage avail ourselves of your kind suggestion regarding a *Fiji* or *Dido*. We have a lot in our plate already and could not in peace, man a cruiser, other than the training cruiser. In war if we need a couple of cruisers with the ANZAM Task Group but we shall have *Hobart* (modernised), *Bellona* and *Black Prince* available. In fact I plan to let New Zealand take the greater share of cruiser provision whilst the RAN does the carriers. Both of course to go full out on anti-submarine and minesweeping.

### DESTROYERS.

6. We are striving to re-arm as far as practicable by mid 1953 but, owing to a variety of reasons I need not go into, our *Darings* have slipped back and I see no possibility of getting the first in commission

<sup>1</sup>The RAN built eight River class and four modified River class frigates between 1943 and 1945. After the war most of the first eight were laid up in reserve, however, several served as hydrographic or oceanographic research ships. Although the four modified Bay class all served in the Korean War they were decommissioned by the mid-1950s. See John Bastock, *Australia's Ships of War* (Sydney, 1975), pp. 195–212.

before the end of 1953. For the ANZAM Task Force I counted on 2 Carriers, 2 Cruisers, 3 Tribals, 2 Battles and 3 *Darings*. Now I shall have no *Darings*, and must look elsewhere. Our Q's are, as you know, doing the 'Rocket' conversion, so will not be available as destroyers. What would be our chances of buying two of your *Darings* nearing completion? I think I could get the finance for them. Weapon Class or earlier would not be much use.<sup>1</sup>

7. Failing that, as we are now in on American mutual aid, I am toying with the idea of trying to get some 2100 tonners.<sup>2</sup> It would be a big departure and would cause tremendous logistic problems, but it may prove the only solution. I should be glad to have your views on the latter proposal if, by any chance, the *Darings* cannot be made available.

### 37. Fraser to Collins

3 April 1951

We are not quite ready to reply to your last letter of 8th March so this is an interim.

Settlement in Korea seems as far away as ever, but anyway now we seem to be on top.

Have just been talking to one of Andrewes' staff just home and they all speak with such high praise of your Australian ships.<sup>3</sup> Cooperation between us is complete and efficiency at the best level.

It is very good to hear, although what one would expect, but I thought you would like to know.

We shall get the *Glory* out in time to relieve *Theseus* who has done awfully well, but rather a stiff time so that we should be able to carry on for another 6 months.

Experience now seems to show that about 6 months intensive flying is about all one can do without a relief and I cannot maintain 2 carriers on

<sup>1</sup>The Weapon class were the last British destroyers to be laid down during the Second World War however none saw service in that conflict. They were fitted with 4-inch guns and were considerably smaller and less capable than the *Daring* class. E. H. H. Archibald, *The Fighting Ship in the Royal Navy 897-1984* (Dorset, 1984).

<sup>2</sup>Collins is probably referring to the USS *Allen M. Sumner* or *Gearing* classes which were completed towards the end and just after the Second World War. Their main armament was 6x5-inch guns and they were broadly similar in capability to the *Daring* class. Over 150 *Sumner* and *Gearing* class destroyers were built and many were sold to various different navies after the war.

<sup>3</sup>RA (later Adm Sir) W. G. Andrewes was the Flag Officer 5th Cruiser Squadron and the senior RN officer afloat in Korean Waters at the start of the Korean War, a position he filled until relieved by RA A. Scott Moncrieff, RN in April 1951.

the station so that I am faced with the possibility of withdrawing her for about 2 months in September for refit and recuperation.

Do you think in September it might be possible to send up *Sydney* for about 2 or 3 months operational flying if the Korea business is still going.

It would be invaluable to the cause and might be useful experience for her.

*Glory* could either come down to Australia or go to Hong Kong or Singapore.

It is a long way off but perhaps you could think it over.

(Note: Must not get my chaps too embedded in Australia as I know from past experience and your kindness I shall never get them away!!!)

Persia now seems to be boiling up, one crisis after another!

### 38. *Fraser to Collins*

20 April 1951

Thank you for your letter of 2nd April, which arrived just as I was about to send off a final reply to your previous letter of 8th March.

2. This therefore will, I hope, answer both letters with the exception that I will not now refer to your proposals for purchasing new destroyers. You will appreciate that this question will need a lot of thought and consideration.

#### Discussion with Radford

3. We have just received the official account of your discussions with Admiral Radford and they are being examined in the normal way by the staffs. At first look the results seem to be most satisfactory and you must have handled affairs with great skill.

4. I am sorry the directive took such a time to reach you. Normally we seem to get in before the US JCS, but in this case the machinery seems to have been complicated and slow. I will try to get you an advance copy in future.

5. As to the wording of the directive, at our original meeting in Washington with the US JCS we agreed firmly 'that the U.S. Navy in the

Pacific would be sufficiently strong to deal with any *seaborne threat* to Australia and New Zealand'. I think that the version which reached Radford was the result of loose drafting and that there is no hidden meaning behind it. I quite agree that his version is unacceptable.

6. We usually find that the US JCS give their negotiators considerably less rope than we give ours. I think that accounts for the fact that your directive was far wider than Radford's, and also that Radford was initially allowed no discretion in deciding the area.

7. In future, we must make certain that agreed directives are sent to both sides, although this very often takes a considerable time to achieve.

#### ANZAM Boundaries

8. As Chiefs of Staff, we have not yet officially confirmed the new boundaries, but I do not anticipate any difficulties, and in particular I think that the new Northern boundaries will be far more satisfactory.

#### Jubilee Manoeuvres

9. I was so pleased to see that you achieved such a fine muster of Commonwealth ships at your Jubilee Manoeuvres. I wish Korea had not prevented us sending some surface ships from the Far East Station.

10. I noted your remarks on the Pakistanis with interest. We have to tread very delicately on the subject of British officers, both in the Pakistani and Indian Navies.<sup>1</sup>

#### Loan of Carrier

10. [sic] We have recently completed a new review of our Carrier requirements and I am glad to say that we shall be able to make available for loan a modified Colossus Class Carrier (probably *Theseus*) early in 1953. This should fit in with your latest dates and the RAN Liaison Officer is accordingly being informed that the way is all clear for an official request. You will appreciate that she will be able to operate only the

<sup>1</sup>For an account of the evolution of the Indian and Pakistani Navies see James Goldrick, *No Easy Answers: the development of the Navies of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka 1945–1996* (New Delhi, 1997).

aircraft you are now using, and that Venoms and GR 17's would present great complications.

11. I have noted with great interest the other points you have discussed and it is very satisfactory to hear that your recruiting is going well.

### 39. *Fraser to Collins*

11 May 1951

First of all, many thanks for your helpful reception to my proposal that you should send *Sydney* to relieve *Glory* in the autumn, if the Korean war is still on, for which I am most grateful.

It will I think also be a valuable experience for her and despite the dislocation of the routine will be a great advantage to you in the long run.

2. I have given much thought to your Destroyer problem. We have already made firm plans for the employment of all our *Darings*, and I do not see how we could let any go. Moreover, they have been 'declared' for priority tasks in the NATO plan.<sup>1</sup>

3. You will understand, I am sure, when I say that we would much prefer that the RAN stuck to British built or British type ships. The reasons are many – standardisation of equipment and subsequent logistic problems, training problems, and last but not least, tradition and sentiment. What is also important is that the US ships are a great deal more expensive than ours. Once a move towards the US had been started, I feel it might be difficult to resist further diversions.

4. I have tried to find some alternative way of helping you, at least from the point of view of the position of the ANZAM Task Force in war, and suggest that if the threat to sea communications in the ANZAM region becomes serious on the outbreak, we should be able to allocate two of the 'CO' Class Destroyers which will be in the Far East to the ANZAM Task Force.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>For an account of the Royal Navy and NATO see Grove, *From Vanguard to Trident*, *passim*.

<sup>2</sup>The CO class destroyers were the third out of four C class destroyers (32 vessels in total) built for the Royal Navy at the end of the Second World War. They were armed with four 4.5-inch guns and were the first RN destroyers designed from the first to use radar gunnery directors. See M. J. Whitley, *Destroyers of World War Two* (London, 1988), pp. 136–8.

This should tide you over, if war came before your *Darings* had been completed and you found yourself in difficulties due to shortage of Fleet Destroyers.

40. *Lloyd<sup>1</sup> to Fraser*

6 June 1951

I had a long chat with Admiral Collins yesterday in which he talked of a meeting held on Monday, the 4th June, at Canberra by the Prime Minister with Sir Frederick Shedden and the Chiefs of Staff.

2. The Prime Minister spoke at length on the very different situation in which Australia found herself compared with 1939. There was now a great shortage of manpower – 300,000 jobs vacant against 300,000 unemployed; a major deficiency in electric power and the difficulty of inducing the farmers to give up wool production in favour of wheat and meat. It appears that the National Security Resources Board considers that the war time demands of the Forces on manpower are much too high and had caused the Prime Minister to tackle the Chiefs of Staff on these lines.

3. Admiral Collins told me that the Army and Air Force demands had come under considerable fire but that 'his modest demands' were not questioned.

4. The RAN (at present 11,000) intend to build up to 15,000 regulars and 9,000 in the Reserve, i.e. an immediate strength on mobilisation of 24,000 men. They further intend on mobilisation to enter 6,000 recruits as soon as practicable and eventually to work up to a mobilised strength of 44,000 men.

5. The Australian military authorities have at last fully realised that there is no threat of invasion in any immediate future and that their forces (land and air) could best contribute to global strategy in the Middle East. Admiral Collins seems to think, though he may be rather optimistic, that this will be adopted by the government before very long. The consequent thinking has rather led the RAN in the role of 'Defender of the Home Land' and Admiral Collins intends to emphasise the control of sea

<sup>1</sup>Capt F. B. Lloyd was probably the head of the RN's section of the UKSLS, who were co-located with the Australian Service Headquarters in Victoria Barracks, Melbourne.

communications in the ANZAM Region as the primary task and not only the defence of Australian waters.<sup>1</sup>

6. CNS fully realises his lack of mine sweepers and is much concerned over it. He reckons that, on the outbreak of war, his frigates and minesweepers will be used as required in the ANZAM region and is now inclined to think that when the 'Plan for the Defence of Sea Communications in the ANZAM Region' (now with the JPS in the United Kingdom) was written last year, too much emphasis was laid on the requirements of Australian waters.<sup>2</sup>

7. His Task Force – and he is very pleased with your statement about 2 COs. in lieu of his request for *Darings* – will be available for use elsewhere, but its first task will have to be the escort to the Middle East of the Australian army. This is necessary politically apart from other considerations. He reckons that it would then be available for use in the Mediterranean provided that the situation in South East Asia has improved, or at the least not deteriorated between now and the outbreak of war. He realises that it will probably not be possible to get this proposal (i.e. to use the Fleet in the Mediterranean) accepted politically before the time.

8. I have written this letter to you personally as Admiral Collins was talking to me privately and, in fact, using me as a listener while he thought out loud. With Admiral Eccles in Sydney, CNS has no contemporary with whom he can really open up.<sup>3</sup> I know he frequently corresponds with you, but I felt you would like my impression of the way he's thinking.

I hope you are keeping fit under your many labours. We shall all be sorry to lose you in December.

41. *Fraser to Lloyd*

22 June 1951

Thank you for your most interesting letter.

Admiral Collins' ideas on the use of the ANZAM Task Force are particularly welcome. I quite understand that it is unlikely that they could

<sup>1</sup> See Hector Donohue, *From Empire Defence to the Long Haul. Post-war defence policy and its impact on naval force structure planning 1945–1955* (Canberra, 1996).

<sup>2</sup> JPS (Joint Planning Staff).

<sup>3</sup> Navy Office was located in Melbourne until 1959.

even be discussed politically before the time, but they will give us a line on which to work.

It will be interesting to see, at the forthcoming Defence Conference, how far the Australian Military have succeeded in putting across to their Government their ideas on the Middle East. I hope for the best!

Yours very sincerely,

Fraser

#### 42. *Collins to Fraser*

5 July 1951

I have delayed writing until the loan carrier question, which is dealt with below, was cleared.

First let me say how sorry I was to read that your time at Admiralty is drawing to a close; in common with all the Navy I shall miss your guidance and co-operation. However I understand there are some months before your relief takes over.

Relief for Eccles. (Your 996 of 17th May).

2. Many thanks for your help. I expect the official request is churning its way through. Eaton will suit us well.<sup>1</sup>

Sydney to Korea.

3. We have agreed that *Sydney* should stay in Korea long enough to let *Glory* refit in Sydney town. I think all the details are being ironed out and I know the lads are keen to go. I am assuming she will still go if Korea fizzles out even if it becomes merely an exchange to the Far East station.

Many thanks for sending on the kind things said about our ships in Korea by one of Andrews' staff.

<sup>1</sup>RA (later VA Sir) John M.W. Eaton, RN was loaned to the RAN as FOCAF, 1954–55, and was the last RN officer to serve in that position. On return to the RN he served as Flag Officer Commanding the Reserve Fleet, C-in-C America and West Indies, and as NATO Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic.

Darings. (Your 969 of 1st May).

4. Your reply that two could not be made available did not really surprise me! I am most grateful for your offer to leave two of the 'CO' class should circumstances warrant. As a result I have given up the idea of US ships and am concentrating on getting ours finished, but you know the difficulty with no direction of labour and a general shortage of everything.

Loan of Carrier.

5. It is really good news that you can make a Light Fleet available. Today I have received ministerial blessing to the Defence Committee recommendation that we should approach Admiralty with the request, so it should soon come through officially. Our aviators are going into the question of what, if anything, should be done to her (at our expense) before she sails, bearing in mind that manpower and materials are hard to come by.

Meeting of Defence Ministers.

6. I am afraid the UK COS are disappointed at Australia's approach to the Middle East problem. We have stressed that, militarily, our forces have no potential so long as we refuse to agree to allocate them definitely to any theatre, but, the political implications of SE Asia are strong.

General Purpose Vessels for Singapore.

7. In anticipation of the official request just received I have four GPV's refitted and practically ready for Singapore on loan as makeshift minesweepers.<sup>1</sup> I do not want to drive a hard bargain but am asking for an allocation from UK production of eight sets of gear for this type of our own vessels (we would buy the gear) thus giving us twelve inshore minesweepers of a sort in the ANZAM Region.

Cruisers.

8. *Shropshire* is worn out and no longer any use as a fighting unit and I am proposing to sell her for scrap. Perhaps as she was a gift we should

<sup>1</sup>Collins is probably referring to Harbour Defence Motor Launches (HDMLs) constructed during WW2, some of which were fitted with minesweeping gear postwar.

transfer the few thousands we shall get for her to you. At present, she is an eyesore in Sydney Harbour and employs some men we can ill afford.

*Australia* is no longer a fighting unit but is a good training cruiser and I intend to keep her running until *Hobart* is finished modernising in about 1953.

Eventually we hope to come in on your new design cruisers. At present, as I wrote earlier, we are concentrating on Carriers, Destroyers, Frigates and Minesweepers, and letting New Zealand provide the Cruisers, but as we progress I hope to get cruisers back into the RAN and am keeping a paper requirement of three.

### LSTs

9. Your staff will recall that we have three LSTs here left by the British Pacific Fleet. *Tarakan* had an explosion and we have proposed to put her up for sale. *Labuan* has been running continuously to the Antarctic each summer and to New Guinea in the winter, has beached hundreds of times and is worn out. *Lae*, in reserve, is a welded job and not much use. I suggest we sell *Tarakan* and place *Labuan* and *Lae* in Rotten Row as they are. We have not the capacity in peace to refit them. If required in war we would have to get them going somehow; it seems a pity to dispose of them.

10. I do so much appreciate your personal help and guidance and trust I have not imposed too much on your kindness and time by the forgoing long letter.

p.s. [pen script addition] Many thanks for arguing that we should propose to HM that our Darings should be called after our 'scrap iron flotilla' destroyers *Voyager*, *Vendetta*, *Vampire* and *Waterhen*.

43. *Creasy*<sup>1</sup> to *Collins*

23 August 1951

This is in reply to your letter of 5th July to the First Sea Lord, who is away on leave until the end of the month.

<sup>1</sup>VA Sir George Creasy, RN was the VCNS.

## 2. Relief for Eccles.

Eaton's appointment was published as agreed with you on 9th August. He sails on 5th September in the *Himalaya*, due at Sydney, I believe, on 5th October. I am sure he will give you first class value.

## 3. Sydney to Korea.

We are most grateful for this exchange with *Glory*. The latter will gain great benefit from the spell at Sydney. I am particularly grateful for your remark that these arrangements will stand even if Korea fizzles out, as otherwise our Docking programme at Singapore would be badly disarranged. In any case it still seems to be any man's guess whether the Korea talks will end in agreement or renewed battle. We were very sorry to hear of the minor troubles that attended *Sydney's* departure from Australia and trust all will go well henceforth.<sup>1</sup>

## 4. Loan of a Carrier

The official request for the loan of a Light Fleet Carrier has now been received in the Admiralty and the staffs will, therefore, be going ahead working out the details with your liaison mission here.

## 5. GPVs for Singapore

Thank you very much for your assistance with General Purpose Vessels for Singapore minesweeping. We are very short of sweeping gear and will have to provide improvised sweep in the Short Term. We will, however, do our best to help you with sweeping gear though you may wish to wait until the new sweeps become available from production. You will probably have seen the Admiralty signal to ACNB detailing methods of improvisation.

<sup>1</sup>*Sydney* did not depart Sydney en route the Korean Theatre until 31 August 1951. It has not been possible to determine with certainty what the troubles were to which Creasy refers, in a letter dated eight days before *Sydney's* actual departure. There was a serious fire in an RAN store at Randwick, Sydney, on 10 August, and there were several instances of unrest amongst dockyard workers in Sydney during August which could have affected *Sydney's* preparations for her departure, but there is no record of them actually doing so. See Robert O'Neill, *Australia in the Korean War 1950–53, Volume II: Combat Operations* (Canberra, 1985), pp. 464–7, and *The Sydney Morning Herald* for 4 July, 10 and 16 August, and 1 September 1951 (State Library of New South Wales, Sydney, Microfilm Collection).

## 6. Cruisers

With regard to new cruisers our ideas on the new design have not yet hardened and I should be very glad to know your views on the type of ship, staff requirements, etc. which would best suit the RAN. Perhaps the Admiralty staff could keep in close touch with yours to ensure that the final design will, as far as possible, be acceptable to you.

7. Incidentally we had a 'feeler' a week or two ago purporting to come from the Peruvians for an old Cruiser and it occurred to us that *Shropshire* might suit you and suit them. So far we have merely told the enquirer that we have no Cruiser. Should you consider it worth while telling the Peruvians about *Shropshire* (if it is confirmed that this enquiry was genuine), perhaps you would let us know and we could examine the question more fully. We would, of course, bring Perry into any discussions, if you want us to pursue the matter.<sup>1</sup>

## 8. LSTs

As regards the disposal of LST (3) in the present unsettled state of world affairs our policy is to hold on to old ships as long as they are likely to be of any use in a war or emergency. I agree that it is not worth wasting refitting effort on *Labuan* or *Lae* but rather than let them rot, it might be possible for them to be sold or let out on charter with the proviso that they would be available to the RN, or RAN, in the event of war or emergency.

## 44. *Collins to Creasy*

2 October 1951

In replying to your letter No. 122 of 23rd August, 1951, let me first take this opportunity of congratulating you on your next job of which I was delighted to read.

## Cruisers.

2. I have thought again about *Shropshire*, particularly in view of your remarks in paragraph 8. She is not battle worthy but she might 'come in

<sup>1</sup>Capt (S) (later RA) Patrick Perry, RAN, was the RANLO London during 1948–52 and 1956–58). Perry was previously Secretary to the 1st Naval Member (1944–48). *Shropshire* was not sold to the Peruvians, but was scrapped in Scotland in 1955 after having been laid up in Sydney from 1949.

handy' in a bombardment role far from air activity or as a base ship in some remote spot, so I am keeping her.

3. We have officially given our views about cruisers through NLO. Briefly we are for the cruiser-destroyer with more endurance. We cannot run to a second variety.

#### Tanker.

4. The Government accepted the tanker proposal without a murmur. I hope their somewhat premature announcement did not cause any embarrassment. It will be a good thing to have a tanker in the ANZAM region and we hope to be able to do some freighting runs each year to relieve Admiralty tankers.<sup>1</sup>

5. Speaking of oil fuel, I am most grateful for your arrangements. I am sure it will be useful to have a good stock here – we have raised our target from 250,000 tons to 400,000. There is very little commercial fuel oil and in an emergency they are bound to turn to us.

#### Torlesse.<sup>2</sup>

6. I am glad he is coming out for no one can fully appreciate the lack of facilities and the logistic problem without seeing that part of the world. *Water* is going to be the big problem.

#### Middle East Planning.

7. The least said the better about Australia's reactions to the proposed Middle East Air Conference. What does concern me is that the UK COS provide a lot of argument for the Army and Air to build up here but practically nothing for the Navy. Our Ministers are getting the idea that the Navies of the Commonwealth are more than adequate and that all our effort should go towards more soldiers and land-based aircraft. I realise it's to get us into the Middle East, where we should be, but perhaps you might pass on to CNS that a request at these Ministerial conferences say

<sup>1</sup>The RAN ordered a replenishment tanker in 1951 which was completed in 1955. At the time the RAN did not have enough personnel to provide a crew and so she was loaned to Britain as the *Tide Austral*. She was eventually commissioned into Australian service as HMAS *Supply* in 1962.

<sup>2</sup>RA A. D. Torlesse, RN was Flag Officer Special Squadron for the British nuclear tests in Australia which commenced in 1952 at the Monte Bello Islands off the north western Australian coast.

for Naval assistance in the Persian Gulf, or such like, in addition to our ANZAM responsibilities, might assist me to get a more reasonable share of the kitty.

I am not complaining as, so far, I have got a very fair allocation, but when the inevitable reductions and cuts come along I may be the first to lose.

### Carrier.

I am hoping we shall get the loan carrier clewed up soon. *Sydney* went off in full enthusiasm, and we shall do our best to give *Glory* a happy holiday.

### New Construction.

We are getting on all too slowly with the 'Darings' but without direction of labour it's very hard to get dockyard workmen, and the Government cannot pay those incentive bonuses that private firms work, and both Cockatoo and Williamstown are rather remote from industrial residential areas. We have four Q's doing the 'Rocket' conversion but it will be 1953 before they are ready. Two Tribals should be modernised by the end of next year. The six fast frigates approved for construction are only in the stage of ordering of material. However we are still just about getting our numbers of the permanent Service, and National Service means 1,000 per year into the Reserve. So in general we are in good heart.

## Part 4

### Collins and McGrigor

#### 45. *Collins to McGrigor*

20 November 1951

I understand that you will be taking over as First Sea Lord early in December and so I would like to welcome you, both personally and on behalf of the Royal Australian Navy.<sup>1</sup>

In the past it has been the practice for the First Sea Lord and the First Naval Member to correspond with each other on matters of policy and

<sup>1</sup>Adm. Sir Rhoderick McGrigor was the 1st Sea Lord from 1951 to 1955.

such like. I have found this arrangement of the greatest value and I think that your predecessors have also considered it a good idea. So, if you agree, I would like to propose that we continue this custom. I know you have many affairs to look after but, if you can spare the time, it would help me to know that I can write you direct as in the past.

My last letter to Lord Fraser was dated 5th July, 1951, to which Creasy replied in the absence of the First Sea Lord. My reply to Creasy of 2nd October is the latest by that channel. I have little to add to that letter except that we are hoping soon to hear news of the loan carrier.

Perhaps I might take this opportunity of saying a word on behalf of Captain F.B. Lloyd, the RN Liaison Officer here, who has no superior Naval Officer to render half-yearly reports on him. It would be a pity if he missed out on that account for I have been impressed by his ability and personality. He is a live wire, enthusiastic and quick thinking, and with a strong personality. I should have assessed him (had I been writing an S.206a) well above average and have recommended him as fit for immediate promotion. In my opinion he would do well in Flag Rank.

#### 46. *McGrigor to Collins*

29 November 1951

Thank you so much for your kind letter of welcome. I have been looking at recent letters between yourself and Lord Fraser and Creasy and I shall certainly be very glad to continue this arrangement which must do so much to help us both.

I am in the throes of taking over, so I shall not attempt to deal with any subjects of mutual interest this time.

Thank you for your remarks about Lloyd which will be a great help when we consider him for promotion in the Spring.

All good wishes to you and all my friends in the Royal Australian Navy. I have had long talks with Foley and Eccles, who is just back, which have given me some idea of the situation your end.

#### 47. *Collins to McGrigor*

8 February 1952

Although I realise that you have many more important and pressing matters to deal with than the logistics of the ANZAM Region, I hope you will be agreeable to an exchange of views between ourselves before I take any definite action at this end.

2. The plan for the Defence of the Sea Communications the ANZAM Region is rapidly becoming regarded as an agreed document, even to the extent of logistic implications. We must, however, be quite clear that there is no agreement, as yet, whereby ACNB of Australia assumes responsibility for the Malayan Area's supplies in a Global war. My views, with which our Defence Committee (= COS Committee) are in general agreement, are developed below.

3. So far, it has been agreed that the ANZAM COS will be prepared to accept 'strategic responsibility for the overall direction and control of operations other than home defence in ... the ANZAM region'. I assume this to mean that the ANZAM chiefs will take over defence of sea communications on 'D' Day, but that the local war in Malaya will remain in the hands of the local command, responsible to UK COS, in the same way that the local defence of New Zealand will remain with NZ COS. Should the Malayan Area become a major theatre, the battle will attain rather more importance than 'Home Defence', and the ANZAM COS might then properly be asked to take over, particularly if the UK COS are deeply embroiled in the European war. The Australian Defence Committee assessment of the position is that a major threat to the Kra Isthmus cannot develop before 'D' plus 9 months in existing circumstances. We could, I think, safely say that the battle would not be fully joined before 'D' plus 6 months.

4. To return to the logistic problem, logistics in the Malayan Area seem to present two aspects:-

- (a) Support for any Naval Forces that may operate as an 'ANZAM force' in the Malayan Area.
- (b) Support for Naval Forces engaged purely on local defence (Local M/S and A/S vessels, &c. of whatever 'nationality') and the local Army and Air (No small matter!)

5. Logically, Operational and Logistic control should be in the same hands. It seems certain, however, that at the outset, the local command will be responsible (to the UK COS) for 4(b) above. If the UK is to be responsible for logistic support of all forces except a possible roving ANZAM Task Group, it seems that UK arrangements might as well include logistic support for the latter force should it be required to operate in the Malayan Area.

6. On the other hand, if and when the ANZAM COS take over operational control in Malaya, Australia might well become responsible for the logistics of all activities.

7. As stated above, we can assume under present conditions that ANZAM COS will not be requested to take over operational control in Malaya till 'D' plus six months (although they would have taken over control of the sea communications ANZAM-wide on 'D' Day). Thus, I suggest that UK should ensure that supplies will be available for six months war consumption by local Naval forces, including 'Maritime Air forces', plus a surplus to be agreed upon in case the ANZAM Task Group is operating in the Malayan Area. Australia should plan to be prepared to take over organising all Logistic support for Naval Forces, including 'Maritime Air Forces', in the Malayan Area and the ANZAM Task Force, should it be operating in that Area, at 'D' plus six months.

8. The Defence Committee agreed that naval logistics could be dealt with in advance of Army and Air, as orders of battle for the latter were not available. They agreed that our Joint Administrative Planning Committee should develop plans on the above assumption and that the UKSLS should inform the UK of what was being done. You will observe that we are planning to organise logistic support after 'D' plus 6 months but not necessarily to provide it. That decision must come later.

9. I have written to Guy Russell in the above sense, in answer to a letter from him asking whether Australia is to assume responsibility for supplies in a Global war, and I understand Lloyd has signalled an outline to your planners.<sup>1</sup> You may have seen his message.

10. Having put our Strategic Concept (which placed the emphasis elsewhere) to the Government as a member of the Defence Committee, I shall find it difficult as CNS to broach the question of Australia accepting responsibility for the logistic support of Naval Forces in the Malayan (UK) area, even at 'D' plus 6 months. I don't think there would be a hope of persuading them to agree to us taking over on 'D' Day, nor do I think we should (or could!)[.]

Since this letter was drafted the sad news of the death of the King has been received. The RAN share with the RN the deepest grief at the loss

<sup>1</sup>Adm. the Hon. Sir Guy H. E. Russell was the Royal Navy's C.-in-C. Far East (1951-53).

of our King. Thank God we have a good staunch [?] one in Elizabeth to follow him.

**48. *McGrigor to Collins***

7 March 1952

Thank you very much for your letter of 8th February about logistic support in the ANZAM area.

2. I am in general agreement with the assumptions regarding Command Strategic Responsibility which you make in your paragraph 3.

3. As I see it, the ANZAM Chiefs of Staff should be responsible for co-ordination and planning of logistic matters at all times, and must be responsible for producing the overall plan. The actual provision of logistic support would be a matter of arrangement according to availabilities and circumstances likely to obtain in war.

4. To ensure that the logistic planning shall be properly established with the ANZAM Authorities in Melbourne and the Admiralty and Far East requirements and plans fully understood there, I intend that our requirements should be discussed and agreed with the Australian and New Zealand Liaison Officers in London, and forwarded to Melbourne for inclusion in the overall plan.

5. The question of logistic support in the ANZAM theatre has now been raised with the Chiefs of Staff by the UK SLS in Australia and it is at present under examination by our Joint Planning Staff.

6. I am forwarding a copy of this letter to Guy Russell.

[pen script addition] From all accounts *Sydney* left Korea with a fine reputation.

**49. *Collins to McGrigor***

1 April 1952

Thank you for your letter of 7th March. I think Burrell, the Assistant Defence Representative London, is pretty well up in the ANZAM

problems and I am glad that you intend to have him in on the discussions.<sup>1</sup> He, no doubt, will be in good heart as he has just been told he is to command *Vengeance*.<sup>2</sup> From the Prime Minister down we are all most grateful to the Admiralty and the United Kingdom for her.

And now may I raise a matter concerning myself. As you know I have had a two year extension in this appointment which will take me till February, 1954. My career plan for senior officers shows that, even at that date, there will be no RAN officer available as 1st Naval Member. Dowling, the senior eligible one, will just have finished his IDC, be a newly promoted Rear-Admiral and will not have had command of the Fleet.<sup>3</sup> Buchanan the next senior will have relieved Eaton as FOCAF a few months before and will have the remainder of his two years to do in that job.<sup>4</sup>

Obviously the best solution is to have an RN Vice Admiral as First Naval Member for two years, if the Australian government would agree, but you will know that this is a stiff proviso. However, should the present Government remain in power (another stiff proviso) I think they might accept the idea. In which case what would your reactions be to an exchange of Vice Admirals.

I realise that Vice Admirals are hard to place and naturally I have not got my eye on any of the Board of Admiralty appointments or such like. Perhaps however you might consider exchanging, for First Naval Member and Chief of Naval Staff, Australia, an appointment like Commander-in-Chief, East Indies, or Commander-in-Chief, South Atlantic. I don't know if Admiralty have a record of my service but I am enclosing a summary of my qualifications for easy reference.<sup>5</sup>

I am writing at this early stage to get your views. A lot of things can happen in the next two years and there are many imponderables but I feel there is no harm in looking ahead.

<sup>1</sup>Capt. (later VA Sir) Henry M. Burrell commanded HMAS *Vengeance*, 1952–54. He subsequently became DCNS for a brief period before appointments as FOCAF, 1955–56; 2nd Naval Member, 1956–57; FOCAF again, in 1958; and then 1st Naval Member, 1959–62.

<sup>2</sup>HMS *Vengeance* was the Royal Navy carrier loaned to the RAN to fill the gap created by the delay in completing HMAS *Melbourne*.

<sup>3</sup>Cdre 1st Class (later VA Sir) Roy R. Dowling was the 2nd Naval Member 1950–52. He served as FOCAF, 1954–55, and then as 1st Naval Member, 1955–59.

<sup>4</sup>Capt. Herbert James Buchanan, RAN, Cdre (2nd Class) Superintendent of Training (CST) and Commanding Officer HMAS *Cerberus* (1950–52). Buchanan subsequently commanded HMAS *Sydney* (1953) before postings as 2nd Naval Member (1953–55) and FOICEA (1955–57). He was promoted Honorary RA on retirement in 1957.

<sup>5</sup>Collins' summary of his qualifications is on the file but has not been included.

50. *McGrigor to Collins*

22 April 1952

Thank you for your letter of the 1st April. I have been looking into the question you raise about your own future. Of course we know you and your record very well over here and we shall be delighted to do what we can to give you an appointment if your Government agrees. This would be so, not only because it is so obviously a good thing from the Commonwealth point of view, but that also we would welcome you for your own sake.

2. As the appointment would not take place until mid-1954 I have not taken the matter up officially with the Government, and would not do so until you have cleared it with your Government and make proposals. The difficulty, of course, will be what appointment to give you, particularly as you will be getting fairly senior, in fact, may be full Admiral by then; of the two you suggest I would propose C-in-C, East Indies. I don't think C-in-C, South Atlantic would be acceptable politically in view of the difficult relationships which occur from time to time, and such thorny questions as the future of Simonstown.

3. However those are matters which can be settled with the Government at the time. The real point is that I do agree in principle.

4. As regards a candidate from here for First Naval Member, I will have no difficulty providing a Vice Admiral for two years as you suggest, and will take very good care that he is a good one.

There is one other matter on which I was about to write to you. Assuming that Korea goes on and on in spite of armistice talks, would it be possible for *Sydney* to relieve *Glory* from about April 1953? By that date the RN will have had three carrier periods since *Sydney* was relieved which is in ratio to the number of operational light fleet carriers in the RN and RAN.

6. I should be grateful for your views on this as to whether you could take on this commitment once again. It would be a great help if you could.

7. I saw *Ocean* at Malta the other day on her way out to Korea to relieve *Glory*, and she and her air group were in great heart and fully determined

to surpass great records set up by all their predecessors and only hoping that it would not be all over before they arrived.

51. *Collins to McGrigor*

14 May 1952

Thank you for your letter of 22nd April and for your assurance that you agree in principle to the proposal for an exchange of Vice Admirals in due course should things work out that way. I agree that there is nothing further to be done at present; we must await developments and the next move must come from us. My suggestion of an appointment as C.-in-C. E.I. was, of course, made at random and was not meant to preclude consideration of any other appointments that might be convenient.

2. Foley had already sent me a feeler from the Naval Staff re *Sydney* going to Korea again, about April, 1953.<sup>1</sup> There are certain difficulties to be overcome (there always are) but, if we receive a request, you can count on a favourable recommendation from the Naval Board to our Government. The final decision must, of course, rest with the Cabinet but there should be no difficulty there. The trouble will be to get aircraft. We shall have Firefly Mk6, which, with no cannons, are not suitable for the Korea role, and our reserve aircraft position would be far from satisfactory if we got beyond small operational losses.<sup>2</sup> However, as I say, these things can be overcome.

3. I am far from happy about our called 'Mobilisation Requirements Programme'. A year ago we seemed to be flourishing. Suddenly we find we have no sterling, no dollars and little capacity in Australia, and may have to cut our requirements. Import licences are meanwhile providing a very effective brake on the flow of essential equipment that we have pulled every string to get from UK. I am hoping that the Navy will escape, as we have kept our demands within reason; it would be tragic if we have to forego some urgently required gear when surely we have enough real wealth to pay for it.

<sup>1</sup>Capt. (S) Bernard Foley, RAN, was RANLO London during 1945–48. Foley has left an invaluable collection of correspondence relating to his time as the Secretary to the 1st Naval Member and RANLO. See J. V. P. Goldrick, 'Selections from the Memoirs and Correspondence of Captain James Bernard Foley, CBE, RAN (1876–1974)', *The Naval Miscellany*, vol. 5, NRS (London, 1984).

<sup>2</sup>The *Firefly* was a two-seat propeller-driven aircraft, originally developed as a fighter. The Mk. 6, developed after WW2 was primarily used for reconnaissance, ASW and gunnery spotting.

4. I am going to Singapore in July to talk ANZAM planning with Guy Russell, particularly the logistic problem relation to Malaya. Another loose end is that until the Middle East Command clarifies we shall be in doubt as to what happens beyond our Western boundary. Recognition of the increased stature of the region by USA will be a long job but fortunately our detailed planning is not held up. We have, in fact, most things neatly tied up with C in C Pac. and are using your Commander Symonds as our contact for Naval Control of Shipping matters.

5. The outline plan for the defence of the sea communications the ANZAM Region has just been approved by the Defence Committee for forwarding to UK and NZ COS. The main point of interest on your level is that a Carrier Task Group, 2 RAN and 2 RNZN Ocean Minesweepers are allocated to the Malayan area initially. We have added a plea for more RN ships to be left there in a global war, but rather on the lines of 'no harm in asking'.

6. Three of our gift to New Zealand of four *Bathurst* Class Minesweepers have sailed and the fourth will follow shortly. If NZ stick to their side of the bargain and modernise them the ANZAM Region will benefit.

7. All seemed to go well with 'Hurricane'.<sup>1</sup> I have just seen Colville, who is quite happy now; the fresh water situation is in hand. I have suggested to Admiralty that Torlesse should fly out when Phase II sails as it would be of advantage to have him here at Navy Office to take general charge of arrangements; Colville can look after affairs in the area. My DCNS is rather snowed under and if Torlesse is not required on the passage he could run things from here and be right in the picture when the ships arrive.

8. I have not long returned from a weeks cruise up the Barrier Reef in HMAS *Australia* with the Prime Minister. It was very good value but we were preaching to the converted as Menzies has a very real appreciation of the importance of a Navy to a maritime Commonwealth and an Island Continent. It made a good holiday for him before his strenuous visit to the United Kingdom.

<sup>1</sup> 'Hurricane' was the name for the British atomic weapons tests in 1952 at Monte Bello, Western Australia.

**52. *Collins to McGrigor***

28 October 1952

I know you will be snowed under after your tour so please don't answer this note which is merely to thank you for finding the time in your busy programme to write to me.<sup>1</sup> I very much appreciated having news of 'Anzac' and 'Condamine' and of my troops out there, and can quite realise that the detour 'down under' was out of the question.

The CAS designate is with us at the moment. We had an interesting forenoon on ANZUS. Between ourselves ANZUS is little or nothing to me. We have everything nicely arranged with ourselves i.e. UK, NZ and AUST., in ANZAM and with the Americans in the four functions that really matter for running war.<sup>2</sup> ANZUS is not an organisation [for] operational control and can never be [as] I see it.

However, I did not want to worry you with these things, but merely to say thank you for your letter. My future I am here till Feb. 1953, when I shall have one year to go. I have written Onslow about this.<sup>3</sup>

**53. *Collins to McGrigor***

28 January 1953

Having squared off arrears of work resulting from 14 days' Christmas leave I feel I might tell you how things go with us in 1953.

Relief For First Naval Member.

It was a pity that our Prime Minister did not manage to have a talk to you (my letters to Onslow of 3rd December, 1952) but everything is now agreed verbally here on the Ministerial level, and I hope in a few days to send an official airmail letter asking Admiralty if an exchange would be acceptable in 1954 after the Royal Visit. The P.M. wants no publicity until much nearer the date.

Coronation.

*Sydney* is taking the Contingent and will remain for the Review. I should like to hoist my flag in her for that occasion but I still have nothing

<sup>1</sup>This whole letter was hand-written by Collins. The letter from Admiral McGrigor to which Collins refers was not located on the file.

<sup>2</sup>Presumably a reference to the Radford-Collins agreement.

<sup>3</sup>Probably Adm. Sir Richard G. Onslow, RN.

definite as to whether I am to go. There is some doubt here about the actual invitation for COS to attend, although Dominion COS are mentioned in the Procession arrangements. If anybody goes it will be me, as I have not been to London since 1949 and it's full time I renewed contacts there.

#### Defence Policy.

Our thinking is on just the same lines as recent COS (UK) papers and we have this week finished another review taking into consideration the financial position and Australia's capacity. Briefly we are proposing 14,550 permanent personnel, a small reduction in Front Line Aircraft, giving up the fourth *Daring* (the Controller suggested this in a letter of 3rd November, 1952), scrapping *Shropshire* (we will consult Admiralty first as she was a gift), retaining *Australia* purely as a training cruiser, not modernising *Hobart* and abandoning one of the five Q conversions. These and other economies will enable us to finance the re-equipping of our naval aviation with Gannets and Venoms which otherwise would have been impossible. These proposals have not yet been to the Defence Committee.

#### *Vengeance.*

We are looking forward to *Vengeance's* arrival and I would again express gratitude for all you have done, not only in lending her, but in getting her refitted and sailed in such quick time, She will be ready and worked up for her Korea cruise.

#### Submarines.

You will know how much we appreciate the RN submarines here. Our Australian Joint Anti-Submarine school is going flat out and exercises are made possible by the submarines. I am off in a couple of weeks to spend a few days with Eaton witnessing Fleet A/S operations in conjunction with the AJASS.

#### Anzam Planning.

Many thanks for sending up your logistic planning expert who was very good value; it seems that we are now making some progress in this somewhat tiresome task. If we have seemed unco-operative in regard to providing planning teams at Singapore and so on, it is only our lack of officers.

Officers.

We are still woefully short and only just get by with our present commitments. Our officer complement is still, in fact, equated to the pre-war navy of 5,500. The thirteen year old entry, our main supply, takes a long time to develop, and we have had little success with the 18 year olds. We are trying a 16 year old entry (two years at the College) but I am not sanguine, as the best boys won't leave their school interests at that age.<sup>1</sup>

General.

On the whole we are in good heart. Our lower deck pay code, with its automatic cost-of-living adjustments, is very generous. We like to think we did 'Hurricane' well, and our boys seem to be well thought of in Korean waters. We had most of the Fleet into Melbourne for the Cup – a triumphant entry with the Naval Board afloat, guards and bands, etc., and at the end of ten days' banzai, had no police reports, which was satisfactory.

Best wishes for the future, and hope to see you in June.

Yours sincerely

John Collins

54. *McGrigor to Collins*

16 February 1953

Many thanks for your letter of 28th January.

As soon as I get the letter about the exchange I will get busy on it, as it has not yet been put to the Ministers. You may be sure, however, that we shall arrange it all right. I saw your Prime Minister once or twice when he was over here, but as he did not raise the subject I felt it would be out of place for me to do so.

I do hope you will be able to come to the Review in Sydney. I gather there are difficulties about it, but I sincerely hope they will be overcome, as there is so much I would like to discuss with you.

<sup>1</sup>See Lt-Cdr I. J. Cunningham's *Work Hard, Play Hard. The Royal Australian Naval College 1913–1988* (Canberra, 1988).

Thank you for the advance information about your Defence Policy. We too are up against this problem of trying to get the best value from what money we can squeeze out of the Chancellor.

I really think that if you do not manage to come over here I shall have to come and visit you, especially as I have never been to Australia!

All good wishes to you, and I do hope I shall see you in June.

**55. *Signal, Naval Board to Admiralty***

4 March 1953

040640Z March

First Sea Lord from Chief of Naval Staff

Your letter 437.

Delighted your suggestion penultimate paragraph but will await developments hinted at by UKSLS before taking any action.

2. My Coronation project having failed am trying to settle means of getting myself overdue London visit. I think invitation to witness part of MARINER would provide reason acceptable to government if this could be arranged.<sup>1</sup> I could have talks in London before Exercise and also visit C in C EIs enroute.<sup>2</sup>

3. The matter is urgent as CGS has received invitation to August C in Cs' conference and probably only one of us can go.

4. My personal affairs of next year are still held up but I am hoping for decision this week.

[Notes by Secretary 1st Sea Lord ?]

Shown to VCNS

Agreement not yet offered from SACLANT for Commonwealth observers.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Exercise MARINER was a NATO exercise held over most of the North Atlantic in 1953 and exercised the protection of merchant shipping against surface raiders and submarines.

<sup>2</sup>C.-in-C. EIs is Commander-in-Chief, East Indies.

<sup>3</sup>SACLANT – Supreme Allied Commander Atlantic, usually a USN Admiral.

**56. Signal, Admiralty to Naval Board**

18 March 1953

181522Z March

For Chief of Naval Staff from First Sea Lord

Thank you for your 040640 which I have not replied to earlier as I have been away.

2. Your paragraph 2. I cordially invite you to come over here to witness MARINER, and I hope you will be our guest in one of HM Ships during the Exercise.

3. I should be very glad of this opportunity of discussing our mutual problems, and I am sure C in C, EI, would also be delighted to see you en route.

**57. Signal, Naval Board to Admiralty**

24 March 1953

232325Z March

For First Sea Lord from Chief of Naval Staff

Approval received to accept the kind invitation in your 181522 for which many thanks. Have asked Foley to arrange details.

**58. Collins to McGrigor**

27 May 1953

Thank you for your letter of 18th May and your sympathy. My wife is very badly burned and, although suffering a lot, is making slow progress; I am afraid it will be a long job.<sup>1</sup> I hope she will be out of the wood before my MARINER trip otherwise I shall have to reconsider it. Assuming it comes off I am most grateful for the offer of a berth in *Vanguard* and, of course, agree that I will be merely a spectator.

<sup>1</sup>Collins's wife was badly burned in a domestic accident in which dry cleaning fluid was set alight by a radiator. Letter, Mrs Gillian Bower (daughter of VA and Lady Collins' daughter) to Alastair Cooper, 5 May 2005.

I am sorry that I can give you nothing definite yet about the proposed exchange. You will appreciate that there is an element here that does not favour a United Kingdom Officer as a Chief of Staff. I think Menzies is personally agreeable, and sees that it is the only reasonable solution. There are, however, other factions at work on him and the outcome remain to be seen. I shall know no more until after his return from the United Kingdom. In the meantime, as I suggested to Richard Onslow, the solution seems to be to leave your nomination for the appointment in mind stand, in the knowledge that it may be switched if the exchange comes about. I hope this does not upset your arrangements too much.

With the Naval estimates restricted to under £48m, I have had to economise in many directions. Whatever happens I want to retain *Melbourne* despite the large increase in cost, but have been forced to apply more cuts in addition to those mentioned in my letter of 28th January, 1953. I am scrapping 12 of our 28 Bathurst Class minesweepers (have offered some to Indo-China) and am afraid we must cancel our Fleet tanker; first things must come first.

On the other side of the picture our first 'Rocket' conversion is due for trials next month and the Fleet is in good heart. The pegging at 14,550 has enabled us to consolidate and the ships and their companies are more settled than previously.

Coronation fever is mounting even here in Melbourne and I can imagine the excitement in London. Sorry not to be there, particularly for the Review.

I make no mention of strange doings in regard to a representative from the UK COS coming to Australia, as you will know that the matter was taken out of the hands of the Chiefs of Staff after they recommended extending a welcome!<sup>1</sup>

### 59. *McGrigor to Collins*

3 July 1953

I think you may like to know that Michael Denny and his wife are doing a trip round the world, and they will be visiting Australia.<sup>2</sup> As you know, he was until very recently Controller, and he will be very willing to

<sup>1</sup>This is probably a reference to a planned visit to Australia by McGrigor being blocked either by the Australian Department of Defence or the Australian Government. No further information has been located.

<sup>2</sup>Adm. Sir Michael M. Denny, was the Royal Navy's 3rd Sea Lord and Controller (1949–53) and C.-in-C. Home Fleet (1954–55). He probably undertook the trip around the world in between these postings.

discuss any subjects with you unofficially, if you so desire, in the light of the long time he has just spent on the Board of Admiralty.

They arrive in Sydney, New South Wales, in SS *Wanganella* on the 17th August, and sail from Melbourne on the 1st September in SS *Orontes* for Adelaide and Fremantle.

I do hope you are alright again yourself, and that Lady Collins is making good progress. What a frightful time you have both been through.

We did so enjoy seeing Australia represented at the Naval Review, and meeting some of your officers and men at the Review and the Coronation. I only wish you could have been there yourself, flying your flag.

I wonder if you can possibly bring the subject to a head of your taking up an appointment as Commander-in-Chief and of our providing a relief as First Naval Member on an exchange basis. It is becoming rather urgent, as I must plan ahead and I do not necessarily want to send the same officer to Australia as I would to the East Indies. I should be very glad if you could get a decision as soon as possible. I gave Mr. Menzies one or two opportunities to bring up the subject when he was over here, but he did not take them.

I do hope you will be able to come over for Exercise MARINER, and that Lady Collins will be sufficiently well by then. We shall, naturally, entirely understand if you have to cancel it.

As you will have seen, one of our Chiefs of Staff will, it is hoped, visit Australia after the planners have laid the necessary foundations. It has not yet been decided whether I shall go or whether it will be one of the others, as that will depend on subjects to discuss. We are, at present, waiting for confirmation from your end of Mr. Menzies verbal invitation.

Many thanks for your letter of 27th May.

#### 60. *Collins to McGrigor*

20 July 1953

Thank you for your letter of 3rd July. I shall look forward to having a talk with Michael Denny and shall see that he and his wife have a pleasant time in Sydney and Melbourne.

I should be more than happy to know that the First Sea Lord is the Chief of Staff to come to Australia. Whoever he is, I shall of course have to be here for the talks and if the visit should coincide with 'Mariner' I shall regretfully have to miss out on the latter.

My wife is definitely improving, thank you, but she will be in hospital for at least a month more and then will have a long convalescence. When

she comes out I shall have to decide whether I can safely leave her for the five weeks I would have to be away for 'Mariner' (assuming the visit of the COS does not clash).

As for the 'exchange', I am not a little perturbed to learn that our P.M. appears to have remained silent on the subject when in UK, having expected a Cabinet decision would be made almost immediately after his return as the result of his soundings in London. I, of course, fully realise how necessary it is for you to have an early decision and I apologise for the delay. I have asked my Minister again to get things going so that it can be presented to Menzies as a pressing problem as soon as he steps ashore early next month. If, however, you cannot wait any longer and must go ahead on the assumption that there will be no exchange I shall understand, and we shall only have ourselves to blame.

#### 61. *McGrigor to Collins*

31 July 1953

I have just heard from our Minister of Defence that he would like CIGS to visit Australia, as representative of the Chiefs of Staff for the meeting in October.<sup>1</sup> The Minister of Defence tells me that he has heard from Mr. Menzies that he would particularly like CIGS to come, as his advice was wanted on training problems of the Army.

I am sorry therefore that I shall not have the opportunity of visiting Australia as I had hoped. Perhaps better luck next time!

Anyhow, I do hope that it will prove possible to see you over here in September but I shall quite understand if you decide at the last moment not to come.

I do hope Lady Collins is making good progress.

p.s. I shall do nothing about the 'Exchange' anyhow until Sept, but the sooner you are able to let me know, the greater the help!!

<sup>1</sup>Field Marshal Lord John Harding, Chief of the Imperial General Staff (CIGS), 1952-55.

**62. *Signal, Naval Board to Admiralty***

4 September 1953

First Sea Lord from First Naval Member

Information just received verbally that exchange proposals are not repetition not approved, many thanks for all you have done. Your letter No. 1632 3rd July Para. 5 refers.

**63. *Collins to McGrigor***

7 September 1953

You will have received my signal telling the bad news that the exchange project has been disallowed. I imagine the decision was made on purely political grounds and that the Government decided it was unwise to provide possible ammunition for the Opposition in an election year. I am very disappointed, not only from the personal angle, but also that such an excellent opportunity to demonstrate Commonwealth co-operation should have been missed. Thanks again for all you did to make it a possible proposal.

Michael Denny passed through last week and was kind enough to give us a most useful one and a half hours' talk on 'Controller' matters, after which we replied with a Board luncheon. He and his wife were in fine form, but it was a pity that they could spend only such a short time here – they sailed that afternoon.

The planners' visit was, I think, quite successful and we now have a series of agreed documents on the planning level to consider before the COS arrives. The command problem will be tricky but should be capable of solution.

As I told Guy Grantham in a recent letter, I still hope to get my trip to the United Kingdom if not later this year then after the Royal Visit.<sup>1</sup>

**64. *McGrigor to Collins***

7 September 1953

I am very sorry to learn that your exchange proposals have, after all, come to nothing. We should so much have welcomed you over here and following that as Commander-in-Chief of one of our stations, but

<sup>1</sup>VA Sir Guy Grantham, RN was the Royal Navy's Vice Chief of Naval Staff, 1951–54.

unfortunately I cannot suggest it except on an exchange basis as it would be taking away one of the few important appointments open to senior officers of the Royal Navy.

I am also personally so keen that we should have exchange appointments on different levels, so that officers of the Commonwealth Navies should really get to know each other and benefit from the widely different experience they get through such exchanges. If, at some later date, such an exchange should become possible on your level, do let me know and I will get busy again.

I am also very sorry that we have been unable to meet either in this country or in Australia. We had looked forward to seeing you over here, and then I had hoped to represent the Chiefs of Staff, but as you know Mr. Menzies particularly asked for CIGS, so he had to go. Perhaps we may look forward to an opportunity after the Queen's visit. I am sure that it would be a good thing if you and I got together and discussed some of our mutual problems.

Guy Grantham showed me your letter to him of the 20th August. With the Army stretched as it is to its fullest extent round the world, we are having an uphill struggle to keep the Navy and the importance of sea communications firmly to the front.

I do hope you and Lady Collins are getting on alright.

#### 65. *Collins to McGrigor*

27 October 1953

Thank you for your letter of 7th September which crossed mine of the same date. As I said in that letter I am most disappointed at the failure of the 'exchange' scheme, particularly as the Prime Minister had given it his personal blessing. However there is nothing more to be done. I am to have a year's extension and to be relieved early in 1955 by Dowling after he does a year as Flag Officer Commanding HMA Fleet. This is, of course, confidential at the moment. I shall be just 56 and not qualified by our rules for pension so it will be interesting to see what happens.

Have just written to VCNS to congratulate him and included a few general comments which he may show you.<sup>1</sup> I repeat how disappointed we all were that you did not come out as this country is becoming less and less naval minded. When the Japanese Fleet was in being to the North of us it was much easier to get across the need for a Navy. I have got the Navy League going on a campaign which may have some results but I do

<sup>1</sup>Collins may have been writing to congratulate Grantham on promotion to Admiral.

hope we can get the First Sea Lord to represent the UK views at some future conference – then we won't spend all the time fighting the land war in the Middle East and Malaya.

## 66. *Collins to McGrigor*

23 July 1954

Many thanks for your letter 1020 of 6th May, 1954. Despite much criticism on the lines of 'The Times' article, the Minister for Defence's Statement on the 'new look', in which the Chiefs of Staff had no say, still holds; we have not been able to achieve a review of it.<sup>1</sup>

The opportunity should arise however, if and when we get a ruling on the Melbourne October Conference. I saw the Prime Minister recently and stressed again the urgency of getting a decision on the recommendations of the Conference; he appeared to appreciate the point, but nothing has yet transpired.

I have had a long battle to retain the Fleet Air Arm at all, and to convince certain persons that Naval Aviation cannot be 'pari passu' with the Expeditionary Force.<sup>2</sup> I have won the first round in that the Minister for Defence has agreed to the programme for the estimates going forward with one carrier, one naval air station and a Front Line of 40 aircraft. I have stood firm that anything less would be a waste of time. It remains to be seen whether we can carry it through the Estimates.

Having in mind your remarks about the doubtful ability of Venoms and Gannets to meet limited war roles I have 'given way' to the extent of including 12 piston aircraft in the Front Line till 1960. We have plenty available and a saving of several million pounds will result in not placing the second order of Gannets. The front line would be 16 Venoms, 12 Gannets and 12 piston aircraft (Furies or Fireflies as appropriate) all with satisfactory backing.

<sup>1</sup>The 'new look' to which Collins refers is more commonly known as the 'Long haul' or 'Long Pull' policy, in which it was accepted that the struggle against communist countries would be a protracted cold war over many years and that global hot war was not likely in the short term. This necessitated reorganisation of spending and force structure priorities, which was not to Collins' or the Navy's liking. See Hector Donohue, *From Empire Defence to the Long haul. Post-war defence policy and its impact on naval force structure planning* (Canberra, 1996), pp. 142–6.

<sup>2</sup>It is not clear that Collins' use of the term 'pari passu' (meaning 'side by side' or 'fairly and without bias' – *Macquarie Dictionary*) is strictly correct or whether his intended meaning was more along the lines of 'interchangeable', i.e. that Collins thought he was arguing that Australia should have both an Expeditionary Force and Naval Aviation.

I won't weary you with our other battles, to retain the second carrier as a training ship, to hold on to our building programme, and so on, but will let you know how it all works out when the budget has been brought down. At present I am fairly optimistic, and console myself with the thought that we could not man any additional commitments even if we had the money. With full employment, high wages and music while you work it's hard to persuade young men to join the Navy. Those that do seem inclined to take their discharge after their first six. With an approved ceiling of 14,550 we are now down to 14,200 and dropping.

On the other side of the picture we have had an interesting and progressive year and have managed to have a ship on the spot on many occasions recently just at the right time, including the old *Australia* on her last cruise with the Governor-General aboard, when a Royal Netherlands Navy LCT got into difficulties off the Barrier Reef.<sup>1</sup>

We continue to get full value from the RN submarines and the Australian Joint Anti-Submarine School at Nowra is flourishing.

There is to be a combined Far East, Australian and New Zealand exercise, with submarines and shore-based air, in the Manus area in October. Charles Lambe is going to provide everything he can, subject of course to cold war requirements on his Station, which are rather unpredictable at present.<sup>2</sup>

I am still in doubt as to my future but whatever happens I am turning over the job to Dowling next February. He will have had the Fleet for a year.

## 67. *Collins to McGrigor*

6 August 1954

I am sorry to address you again so soon after my letter of 23rd July but our Prime Minister's speech last night has cleared the air considerably, with its acceptance of a definite commitment to provide forces for any form of SEATO that may be established.<sup>3</sup>

Although I know you will already have it very much in mind, I write to you now to ask that the importance of a naval contribution from Australia is not overlooked. So often in these conferences the soldiers get down to their D + 60 days, and so on, and it is assumed that the Navy

<sup>1</sup>LCT is a Landing Craft, Tank – a flatbottomed vessel designed to beach, discharging its cargo of vehicles (not always tanks) via a bow ramp, which lowers to the beach.

<sup>2</sup>VA Sir Charles Lambe was C.-in-C. Far Eastern Station, 1951–55, and subsequently the 1st Sea Lord, 1959–60.

<sup>3</sup>SEATO (South East Asian Treaty Organisation).

will be there. It may well be that the survival of the RAN will depend on the demands of SEATO. You and I know what a good deterrent a warship can be in peace, and that when trouble suddenly arises in the form of a limited war, the cry is for an aircraft carrier. But unless it is plugged hard at the conference we won't have a carrier or a ship to contribute. We also know that in global war we must keep open the sea communications, but this essential is usually dismissed in one paragraph on page 1 of the report!

So if I may, without seeming presumptuous, I suggest that the United Kingdom representatives be briefed to come at Australia for a reasonable naval contribution in addition to the demand for soldiers and shore-based air. Australia's initial contribution may well be tied up with the strategic reserve. In this event I visualise that the RAN ships would quite properly be put under C-in-C, FES.

I know you will treat this letter as a personal chat to you. It's the sort of thing I could so much more easily say in conversation than commit to paper.

#### 68. *McGrigor to Collins*

31 August 1954

Many thanks for your letters of 6th August and 23rd July, which reached me on my return from leave.

We are certainly all having our Naval troubles in this big bomb era. I am so glad to hear that you are having your successes.

We understand that the Baguio conference will be largely political. We are sending General Brownjohn, the Chief Staff Officer to the Minister of Defence, to represent the United Kingdom Chiefs of Staff at the meeting. I have made sure that he is fully briefed as to the importance of the Australian Naval contribution.

As you say, all these things always get down to soldiers and their D + 60 days, and so on, but Brownjohn, I am sure you will find, is now fully aware of the importance of the Naval side. I am only sorry that we could not send a sailor.

#### 69. *McGrigor to Collins*

29 October 1954

The Chiefs of Staff saw Jack Slessor after his return from Australia and he told us what he had been doing and seeing over there, and showed us

a copy of some of his comments which he sent to Sir Frederick Shedden.<sup>1</sup> Part of it was an attack on the Navy, and particularly the Fleet Air Arm, which read as follows:–

‘12. I do not think you are really facing up to realities on the naval side of the programme, and suggest you confuse the issue by considering Naval Aviation under the general heading “Air Power”. One light carrier with a few Gannets and Venoms have not really got anything to do with Air Power.

13. The Australian Navy can only be a tiny fraction of Allied sea power in the Pacific and Far East. I think that by trying to be a miniature microcosm of a full-sized Navy you are wasting valuable money and resources which could be better devoted partly to other Naval purposes and partly to the Army.

I don’t think Australian Naval Aviation can be economically maintained on a reduced basis. Measured in cost of each operational flying hour by carrier-borne aircraft even in a 2-carrier force – i.e. in terms of dividend in the form of impact upon the enemy from the capital and annual maintenance costs I believe Naval Aviation for Australia is prohibitively uneconomic. You should either have much more or none.

14. The true role of the RAN seems to me (always as a part of the Allied Navy as a whole) to be (a) convoy escort of troop and supply ships between Australia and SE Asia. (b) Cooperation with land and air forces in stopping infiltration of enemy personnel and supplies from the sea behind the main defensive position in Asia. (c) Defensive patrols against submarines and minelayers in the vicinity of the main Australian ports.

15. If you do retain a light carrier, I’d have thought the case was stronger for that one to be employed on troopship escort. I don’t think a light carrier is suitable for offensive operations in forward areas. I suspect it would quickly get sunk (we are not now considering the sort of war as in Korea when our carriers enjoyed complete immunity from enemy air, submarine or mine attack).

16. But I don’t think you can afford any naval aviation. The carrier element in the Allied Navies must be supplied by the US. The RAN should have more light craft for the jobs in paragraph 14 above (including the light craft now tied up screening carriers).’

<sup>1</sup>Marshal of the Air Force, Sir John (Jack) Slessor was the British Chief of Air Staff in 1950–[1952?] during which time he had put forward similar arguments about the Royal Navy’s Air Arm.

I am sending you this because he told me that he had discussed his remarks with the Chiefs of Staff of the other two Services, but not with you.

I have written to Charles Lambe, in view of his coming visit to you, and sent him a complete copy of Jack Slessor's comments and asked him to do what he could to undo the mischief which Slessor might have done. I have also told him that our Admiralty views on the subject are as follows:—

(a) The primary role of the Australian Navy in War is the defence of sea communications in the ANZAM area, the most important of which are those between Australia and the part of Asia where Australian Forces will be engaged in the battle against Communism. The forward strategy of defence in South East Asia is not possible unless this can be done.

(b) As the major power in this area it is an Australian responsibility to provide the most important elements in the defence of these essential Sea Communications. This responsibility cannot be passed to any other nation. Although the United States can be expected to contribute on a large scale in any future war against Communism in the Far East even their resources are not unlimited and we must expect that they will therefore concentrate upon offensive action against the Asian Mainland and the defence of their forward bases in the immediate proximity to it.

(c) The Russian Navy is today the second most powerful Navy in the world. The main threat to sea communications will be from Russian submarines and raiders. An air threat also exists in the northern part of the area. This is likely to increase as China becomes a major air power.

(d) The most effective method of providing the air component of convoy defence in the wide spaces of the ANZAM area is by carrier borne aircraft since

(i) It will be difficult to forecast where the threat is likely to materialise. The building of sufficient airfields to cover the area by shore based aircraft would be prohibitively expensive and would almost certainly be physically impossible in an important part of the area because of the attitude likely to be adopted by Indonesia.

(ii) a carrier on the other hand can take her air power to the point of danger. Every hour flown by carrier based aircraft is operationally useful. Shore based aircraft which have to fly great distances to and from the operational area are only effective for a small proportion

of their flying hours. This factor is important when assessing the relative costs of shore and carrier based air support.

(iii) the Air Defence of the long lines of sea communication from Australia to Asia against all forms of attack can only be achieved from a carrier except at the extreme ends. The aircraft planned to go onto the Australian carriers in the near future are suitable for defence against air and submarine attack but it will undoubtedly be necessary before long to modernise the carriers so that they can handle aircraft more suitable for attack on enemy surface ships and also the next generation of fighters.

I would go still further, and, say that while we fully recognise the need for the Australian Air Forces to provide tactical air support for the army in the field, if money is short the Australians might be well advised to leave the provision of tactical air power in the ANZAM area to the United States of America. Medium bombers based in Australia would not become effective until the enemy had advanced to the islands north of Australia, whilst if they were based in South East Asia, a large airfield building programme would be required. In this case the adequate defence of sea communications would become of even greater importance.'

I hope that that is anyhow roughly in line with what you think, but doubtless you will be able to correct any error when you see Charles Lambe.

Slessor went on to justify his remarks by saying categorically that your one Carrier and its aircraft, and presumably what was behind it, cost you £17M. a year, which could not be justified. Unfortunately I had no figures on which to challenge this, though I did so on principle.

I am glad that Charles Lambe is going down to you, and also that you will all be getting together on ANZAM matters. I am so glad, too, that you are going to keep a destroyer on the Far East Station. You know my views already that the more we can exchange ships and officers, the better it will be.

You will have heard that when you go into retirement I shall follow you very quickly. I suppose there is no chance of seeing you before then.

Anyhow, all good wishes to you.

70. *Collins to McGrigor*

29 October 1954

This morning's paper announces that Mountbatten will succeed you next March.<sup>1</sup> I have no doubt that you will not be sorry after three and a half years 'hard labour', but as I shall be writing again before I leave this chair in February I will defer the saying of goodbye and thank you till then.

As you forecast in your 1773 of 31st August, the Manila Conference did not get down to the facts of life and I am glad that, as a result, we got some sort of endorsement of the Harding Report.<sup>2</sup> I am sure we must go ahead now on the ANZAM level before we can make any progress with the Americans. I like the idea of the respective Australian COS and the Far East Commanders-in-Chief getting together and, as you may know, Charles Lambe is coming to Melbourne in late November to confer. Madden is coming from New Zealand and we have arranged for Far East and NZ planners to get together with ours for 10 days before we meet.<sup>3</sup> You will have gathered from past comments that I have always been 'an ANZAM man' and I am glad that things have turned out this way, for ANZAM is realistic whereas Five Power, ANZUS, SEATO, etc. are all so indefinite.

SATEX (the combined exercises North of Manus) was a great success and it was good value having Gladstone and his Fleet with us.<sup>4</sup> We are looking forward to having *Defender* here for the Cup.<sup>5</sup> The submarines had a real gruelling under very trying conditions and did a grand job.

I promised to let you know how things worked out in the Budget. I can now say that it is better than I dared to hope. By refusing to obey Cabinet Directions, based on the infamous 'new look' paper, I caught the pendulum on the swing back and now we have everything we were fighting for, including £2.4 m. more than last year. Of course it means we shall have only one operating carrier, but the second one will be available

<sup>1</sup>Adm. Louis Earl Mountbatten, RN was the RN 1st Sea Lord, 1955–59 and the British Chief of the Defence Force Staff, 1959–65.

<sup>2</sup>The Harding report was named after the CIGS, Field Marshal Lord Harding. Discussions between Australian and British politicians and military planners culminated in a meeting in Melbourne, 19–21 October 1954, which identified Malaya (as opposed to the Middle East) as the primary objective for Australian and New Zealand planning and operations for global war, and established the basis for the Commonwealth Far East Strategic Reserve. See Donohue, *From Empire Defence to the Long Haul*, pp. 128–46.

<sup>3</sup>Probably VA A. C. G. Madden, RN.

<sup>4</sup>It seems likely that Gladstone was the C.-in-C. of the RN Far East Fleet.

<sup>5</sup>HMS *Defender* was a Daring Class destroyer completed in 1950. The 'Cup' referred to is probably the Melbourne Cup horse race run on the first Tuesday in November each year.

at short notice, and with a front line of five squadrons, with full backing, we shall be able to start out the war with two carriers. As I have stressed before, manpower is our problem and we could not man the original plan without paying off all our destroyers and frigates which, of course, is out of the question.

On a ceiling of 14,400 I think we have a fairly good balance now with our running carrier, training carrier, four destroyers, six frigates (including *Quadrant*), two surveying ships and five ocean minesweepers. Three *Darings* and four fast frigates, two inshore minesweepers, a tanker, and oddments building, and three more Q's almost converted to fast frigates. In reserve we have the remainder of the River Class Frigates, twelve ocean minesweepers converted to 'comprehensive', another twelve we are scrapping and the old *Hobart* in the 'come in handy locker'.

Other than turning over to Dowling on 24th February I am still in doubt as to my future. There are hints of some other Commonwealth (of Australia) appointment, but nothing definite yet.<sup>1</sup>

#### 71. *McGrigor to Collins*

3 December 1954

Thank you very much for your letter of 29th October, 1954. I am delighted to hear how well you did in the Budget. I only hope I may follow in your footsteps!

I have had a further letter from Shedden, of which I enclose a copy for your personal information, and my reply to it.

With regard to paragraph 4 of his letter, I am not quite so sanguine as your Minister appears to be when he says 'In regard to convoys for Australian Expeditionary Forces the United Kingdom or United States of America should, according to the theatre of strategic responsibility, supplement the strength of the Royal Australian Navy by providing the escorts of necessary strength'.

Although it is quite true that in the event of a major and direct threat to British territory in the ANZAM region we now visualize [*sic*] that some of all of the Far East Fleet may remain, at least initially, in the area, it will be for decision at the time whether any aircraft carrier which may have been sent from the Home or Mediterranean Stations to reinforce the Far East Fleet should remain to assist you in support of your convoys, or whether it should return to NATO.

<sup>1</sup>After retiring from the RAN, Collins was appointed as the Australian High Commissioner to New Zealand, 1956-62.

We are, at present, considering all those questions of dispersal which are so necessary in these days of nuclear warfare. One of these questions is the dispersal of the Reserve Fleet, and I do hope that when the time comes you will find it possible to retain *Vengeance* in Australia.

You leave your chair in February. I leave mine in March. I do hope we may meet again sometime, if only to poke Charlie at our successors!

A happy Christmas and New Year

## 72. Collins to McGrigor

27 January 1955

I have delayed writing to you until I had some definite news of my future, consequently your letters of 29th October (which crossed mine of same date), 3rd November and 3rd December are outstanding.

Thank you very much for the information about Slessor's report and the ammunition you provided to counter the attack. Your letter to Shedden enclosed in yours of 3rd November answers my problem set out in my signal of 10th November as VCNS suggested it would in his of 12th November. I think the situation has now settled down and the FAA is safe.

I am afraid there is no hope of us keeping *Vengeance* out here. She is due to leave Sydney with complement for HMAS *Melbourne* and free freight about 16th June, 1955. She visits Singapore to lift 52 RN aircraft (Admiralty's 071032 December) and free freight, and is due in UK in early August to commence preparing for reserve. The personnel will be available till about 14th November which I hope will meet our 'gentleman's agreement' that we would share the job of preparing her. Apart from the difficulties of transporting *Melbourne's* ships Company it would be beyond our resources to maintain *Vengeance* in reserve here. Our manpower situation is not improving. Sorry I can't assist, as I see the advantages, but it just can't be done.

Taking it all round I think I'll turn over a fairly well-balanced small navy to Dowling with manpower about 1,000 short of the 14,400 ceiling and a budget of £48 m. which he may find difficulty in spending. For myself I am still in doubt. The only offer that has been made so far is to relieve Rear-Admiral Moore as Minister at Manila, which does not appeal to me. If that's the best they can do (remember, we unlike the RN, are supposed to serve to our retiring age) then I must get myself discharged and look to big business or such like. I have no desire for the farm and unfortunately no Governorships become vacant for upwards of two years.

As this will probably be the last of the series of letters that have passed between us I would like to thank you most sincerely for all the help you have given me in the past, and the trouble you have taken, amidst a deluge of important problems, to write me at length. I very much appreciate what you have done not only for me but for the whole RAN.

Goodbye and good luck. I hope we may soon meet, as you suggest, to poke Charlie at our successors.

## Part 5

### Dowling and Mountbatten

#### 73. *Mountbatten to Dowling*

18 April 1955

On taking over the office of First Sea Lord I thought I would like to write and tell you right away how much I hope we shall be able to maintain a close personal contact by correspondence and I hope also from time to time by visits.

I am sure I do not need to tell you that I will ensure the continued friendly co-operation between our Navies.

#### 74. *Dowling to Mountbatten*

27 May 1955

Dear Lord Louis,<sup>1</sup>

Many thanks for your letter of 18th April,<sup>2</sup> which came by sea mail and reached me only yesterday!

Congratulations on reaching the top of the Naval tree. I meant to write long ago and say that and wish you all good fortune in the years ahead. Times are somewhat sticky for the RN and for us out here – but that gives us all the more to do and certainly adds interest.

<sup>1</sup>The salutations in the correspondence between Dowling and Mountbatten have been reproduced, as they are an indicator of how the relationship developed between the two men.

<sup>2</sup>This letter was hand-written by Dowling.

Guy Grantham<sup>1</sup> is a very good friend of mine (he was my Captain in *Naiad* during the war) and is a great man. We write to each other from time to time. As I was in London in 1953 we saw something of each other then. I have not heard from him for several months but hope he is enjoying filling your shoes in the Med.

Although CNS, I am still a Rear Admiral, which from the status angle is somewhat annoying, especially when sitting in Defence Committee with an Air Marshall and a Lieut. General as the other Chief of Staff. I was not keen to be promoted before my nominal 3.3 years as a RA as I want to keep all our ranks entirely in line with the RN. However Exchange Service for flag officers seems to be completely out because of political thought here and it no longer matters if I'm given the rank after 2 years. I suggested acting rank, after asking Guy's advice, but this may not suit my masters. I shall know the answer very shortly.

I am visiting Scott-Moncrieff<sup>2</sup> in Singapore towards the end of June and will attend the washup of exercise ANZEX on June 28th – followed I hope by a visit to Bangkok. It doesn't seem likely that I shall be able to visit you at Admiralty this year though one never knows.

As you know, our two Navies are very closely knit. We are very grateful for all the assistance and guidance we've had in the past. As I said in a recent National broadcast, 'We depend on the Mother Country for research and development of our ships and everything in them, for "know how" in building ships and manufacture of munitions in Australia ... we have adopted the traditions of the Royal Navy as our own and in two world wars we have enriched those traditions in no small way ...'. I tell you that, to ensure that you really do understand our Naval thought in the Antipodes.

We hang on tight to the guidance of QR and AI and the Rules of the Naval Discipline Act (slightly modified to suit local conditions) and so far there has been no concerted pressure from outside sources to break the grip. Now and then some 'wise-guy' suggests that we follow the RN too blindly and closely or that it's high time we wrote our own instructions (shades of Canada) but we smile and ignore such thoughts. Your use of the words 'friendly co-operation' has caused me to expand on the subject.

I hear you may be coming out to see us about March 1956. We would appreciate that very much and you will get a warm welcome from all quarters as well as the Naval one.

<sup>1</sup>Adm. Sir Guy Grantham was C.-in-C. Mediterranean 1954–57.

<sup>2</sup>RA A. Scott Moncrieff, RN was the afloat Commander of the Commonwealth Naval Forces in the Korean War from April 1951 to September 1952.

I have been most dissatisfied with our liaison in London for years and was unable to get John Collins to make a change. I hope that from about August this year the Paymaster Captain will disappear and be replaced by an executive officer! I am sending Oldham<sup>1</sup> to replace Perry as RANLO at Australia house and have sought approval to give him the Commodore II stripe. Perry is a very able officer but it is not a Pusser's job owing to past training. RANLO must be an officer who can not only talk to Board members, but who is welcome on the Planning level and can visit Technical Schools and attend sea exercises from time to time. I am sure Admiralty officers will find the change most welcome.

I appreciate your suggestion that you and I should maintain personal contact by correspondence. I shall keep it direct and not in the form of messages through RANLO.

This particular letter is written in longhand as I find myself at home with an unexpected night off, and your letter to me is five or six weeks old and calling for early acknowledgment. By the way I have no doubt that in future I shall have certain information or comment which must not come to the ears of my political masters. Dangerous.

Do you remember our game of bowls at Newcastle on Tyne? You were about to depart in *Kelly* and I was Commander of *Naiad* at Hawthorn Leslie standing by building. I have not played bowls since – too tough on the back.

Sincerely Yours,

Roy Dowling

p.s. I have been in the chair here for only six months but long enough to pick up the ropes and am thoroughly enjoying it.

75. *Mountbatten to Dowling (and other Commonwealth Chiefs of Naval Staff)*

19 August 1955

I am most anxious that Chiefs of Naval Staff of Commonwealth countries should be kept in close touch with matters of interest which are under

<sup>1</sup>Capt. G. C. Oldham, DSC, RAN. Oldham was a seaman officer who served in a variety of staff and command appointments: Staff Officer (Operations and Intelligence) to the Rear Admiral Commanding the Australian Squadron, 1940–41, CO, HMAS *Swan*, 1942–43; CO, HMAS *Shropshire*, 1944–45; Joint Secretary to the Australian Chiefs of Staff Committee, 1945–46; and Director of Naval Intelligence, 1948–50.

consideration in the Admiralty in London, and I believe that the best way to do this is by a personal letter, which I intend to send you about every quarter.<sup>1</sup> I will leave it to your discretion as to whether you show these letters to your subordinates; but they are primarily for your own personal information and I do not intend to include detailed information.

### Review of Naval Policy

In January this year various working parties were set up by the Board to investigate different aspects of future Naval policy. Encouraging progress has already been made, particularly on the problems of the Reserve Fleet, control of shipping, headquarters and mobilisation. In future letters I will give you further information of progress being made.

### Ships of the Future

The thermo-nuclear threat will in due course compel carrier striking forces to operate in a number of mobile supporting 'battle groups'. Current thought suggests that a battle group should consist of:—

- (a) One Carrier
- (b) One Missile Cruiser
- (c) Four Missile Destroyers and
- (d) Possibly Two Type 15 Frigates.

Consideration has been given to new construction ships required for these battle groups and I am convinced that we would be unwise to tie a Commander's hands in the future by providing him with Specialist destroyers; we are therefore thinking in terms of general purpose ships with an endurance of about 5,000 miles at 20 knots and able to carry out A/S, A/A and to a limited extent A/D functions.<sup>2</sup> We are trying to fit this in as small a hull as possible but as in the future aircraft will be able to launch their attacks on ships from outside gun range, we have considered it necessary to have a large enough ship to carry a guided weapon of the SEASLUG type.<sup>3</sup>

As regards replacements for our present cruisers, the main advance in thought is that armour protection in excess of 1½ inches in modern war

<sup>1</sup>This letter was a newsletter Mountbatten sent to all Commonwealth Navies.

<sup>2</sup>A/D is Aircraft Direction – the tactical control or direction of aircraft by qualified crew in a ship.

<sup>3</sup>The Seaslug was the RN's first surface-to-air guided missile and fitted to their County class destroyers. It was never acquired by the RAN.

is considered to be of little value. Sketch designs are being prepared of ship of about 15,500 tons, armed with two modern twin 6" turrets forward and a long range guided missile aft; ultimately the 6" guns forward may be replaced by a surface guided missile launcher.

### Support of the Fleet

One of the most pressing problems which the Admiralty is tackling is the support for the Fleet. Shore support has been built up over a number of years as a backing for a fairly large sea-going fleet and the inevitable reduction in the sea-going fleet has not been matched by a comparable reduction in the shore support. I am the Chairman of a Board Committee dealing with the problem in conjunction with a sub-Board Executive Working Party; and we are making a thorough study of every item in the present administrative backing for the fleet.

### Manpower

In recent years various attempts have been made to meet the growing problems of lack of regular recruits and poor re-engagement rates. None of these attempts has had any noticeable effect. In order to try and get to the root of the matter a Committee on Manning and Recruitment under the chairmanship of Sir Henry Wilson Smith (who is a director of many companies and formerly Permanent Secretary at the Ministry of Defence and Second Secretary at the Treasury) and of which Admiral Eccles is the Deputy Chairman, has been set up to investigate the causes of the current shortage of manpower on the lower deck and to recommend measures to remedy the shortage. Their terms of reference are very wide and the committee will not limit their remedies to conditions of Service alone. Any financial 'inducement' to re-engage will, of course, have to be discussed with the other two services.

### Review of the Officer Structure of the Royal Navy

During the last 18 months a Committee under Admiral Aubrey Mansergh<sup>1</sup> has been considering the whole question of the Officer Structure of the Royal Navy, and although all the recommendations have not been approved the main lines of the scheme have been accepted. A digest of

<sup>1</sup>VA Sir C. Aubrey L. Mansergh was the Chairman of the committee which studied officer structure and eventually recommended the Post and General Lists for the RN. The system was examined for the RAN by the then RA Henry Burrell and adopted by the RAN in 1956.

what has been done so far is included with this letter for your information.

### Reintroduction of Frock Coats

Consideration has been given to the possibility of re-introducing frock coats for naval officers; this is highly desirable as there is a definite requirement for officers to be equipped with a No. 1 rig as soon as possible.

The principal difficulty in re-introducing this rig is the expense. Even though the proposal is to introduce frock coats for Commanders and above only, the initial cost will be about £36,000 and an annual cost thereafter of £5,000. It is not the intention to re-introduce cocked hats or epaulettes. The matter is still under consideration and you will be informed as soon as a decision is reached and have plenty of warning of the date on which an announcement, if any, is being made.

### Extension of Square Rig<sup>1</sup>

For some time now consideration has been given to extending square rig to the Supply and Secretariat and Sick Berth branches, as has already been done in the Royal Canadian Navy.

The Director General of the Supply and Secretariat Branch is in favour of the change for new entries in his branch, leading ratings and below already serving being permitted to wear fore and aft rig for the remainder of their engagement or to change to the new rig at their own expense.

The Medical Director-General considers that the Sick Berth Branch should be allowed to retain their existing rig, as the only one suitable for their work, since they have to remove their coats and wear smocks when on duty. He also considers that such a change would be prejudicial to re-engagement and recruiting in the Sick Berth Branch.

### The Introduction of White Caps all the Year Round.

For some time now trials have been carried out with a white plastic topped cap for ratings in square rig and a white plastic topped peaked cap for officers and ratings in fore and aft rig. These trials have proved most

<sup>1</sup>'Square rig' is the colloquial (naval) term for the uniform usually worn by junior sailors, and characterised by the round sailor's cap and bell-bottom trousers. 'Fore and aft rig', the colloquial (naval) term for that worn by officers and senior sailors, is characterised by the peaked cap.

successful, the caps being both smart and easy to keep clean. I myself have worn such a cap for the past three years and have found it a great improvement over the blue cap and white cap covers. The main advantage, however, in the introduction of these caps is economy in space and money, since the intention is that the caps should be worn the whole year round irrespective of climate and the sailor would therefore require the white cap only, the blue cap being dispensed with. The peak cap for officers and ratings will have a permanent white plastic top, thus doing away with cap covers.

It is intended that these alterations should come into full effect on the 1st May, 1957, but there is to be a transition period starting on the 1st May, 1956 during which time:—

- (a) white head-gear would be worn ashore and for ceremonial purposes;
- (b) blue or white head-gear would be allowed for working on-board and in shore establishments.

It is understood that the Royal Canadian Navy will also be wearing white plastic topped caps the whole year round from 1st May, 1956.

I should value your views on this policy.

[Yours sincerely ?]

[Mountbatten]

p.s. As the 'Missile Destroyers' will be ships of over 5,000 tons displacement, about twice the size of a destroyer, and yet only half the size of a cruiser, I am toying with the idea of reviving the time honoured name 'Carronade'. Have you any views on this name or any better suggestions?

**76. *Dowling to Mountbatten***

24 January 1956

Dear 1st Sea Lord,

Your periodical letters are of great interest and value to me and go a long way in keeping us in the Far Flung Antipodes in touch with what is and what probably will be. I am most grateful.

Thank you for early warning of the broadcast due to-morrow concerning officer structure in the RN. Our problems are very much the same as yours and there is no doubt in my mind that the RAN in due course will adopt at least the major changes. It is essential to maintain our very close relationship in every thing that really matters. I have deliberately awaited the final Admiralty decisions – as now being studied in advance AFO – before attempting to decide exactly what we shall do. I am shortly setting up a Special Committee under Rear-Admiral Burrell (at present Flag Officer Commanding the Australian Fleet and 2nd Naval Member designate) to study all facets and give recommendations to the Naval Board.<sup>1</sup>

### Dress.

With reference to an earlier letter of yours we out here are in favour of extending square rig to both (S) Branch and Sick Berth Branch under the conditions you expressed. We do not agree with MDG that square rig will prejudice recruitment and re-engagement and we do not deem valid his objection that this rig could not be worn under a Smock.

With regard to white cap covers, as you know we wear white covers the whole year round on this station. We therefore heartily support any proposal that will make white caps lighter and/or easier to keep clean. As a matter of fact I personally believe that we should be thinking of doing away with the Sailors Cap. It is uncomfortable and disliked by nearly all sailors. I have thought of a soft cap on the lines of the US gob!

I (again personally) would like to see the frock coat re-introduced. I shall have more to say about that when I see you out here.

### The Way Ahead (for the RAN)

I shall be writing to you shortly on this subject. I would like you to know our major problems, doubts and probable capabilities in time for you to have these things thought on before you visit us in April.

### Your Christmas Eve Letter.

The visit to Canada and USA was certainly most interesting and valuable. You apparently still have a very strong constitution. Incidentally I think the submariners should have had a 'one man control' submarine

<sup>1</sup>This was in part adoption of the Post and General Lists and, although adopted by the RAN, was dispensed with after a fairly short period.

with the capabilities of *Albacore* years ago. I believe the submerged vessel is by far the most important vessel of the future.<sup>1</sup>

### Your Visit to Australia.

We are delighted to know that you and Lady Mountbatten are really coming. I have no details of the itinerary as yet except what I have gleaned from Dallas Brooks and Captain Smallwood (UKSLS) but I believe the PM has asked you to arrange details direct with me and that I shall be hearing from you in the near future.

I was somewhat worried that you were not visiting Canberra before Melbourne but am assured that both the Governor General<sup>2</sup> and Bob Menzies are happy about it and prefer to have you there in the middle of the week. I am pleased about that because Canberra in a week-end would not be much use.

Your agreed plan as I know it is to arrive Melbourne at 1600 on Thursday 5th April from Christchurch, remain here until proceeding to Sydney on the 9th, then Canberra (3 days), Woomera (7 hours), Perth, then stage to Singapore. At first sight I think you should have one more day in Sydney area and one less in Canberra. However, you could visit our Air Station at Nowra and the Naval College site at Jervis Bay by short flight from Canberra if you can't do it from Sydney. More about that in due course.

As I see it, your visit to Australia (as 1st Sea Lord) is concerned almost entirely with Commonwealth Defence and with Chief emphasis on Naval affairs. As you know, we have had quite a number of Generals and Bomber Barons in the Antipodes from England since the war – and barely an Admiral. A visit by the 1st Sea Lord himself is a great and extremely valuable occasion and can do much towards ensuring that political and public thought on Defence is kept, or put, in balance. However important the bomber offensive and air defence of Great Britain may be, I take a poor view of Air Marshals who tell us that the same situation applies to the defence of Australia – and that a few Bombers based on this country can act as a deterrent to global war. The RAN is not exactly in the doldrums but it needs a helping hand and no-one can do that better than you can. You will have the attentive ear of the politician and the public.

I am very keen to accompany you throughout your visit to this country. There are many things I want to show you, tell you and ask you about.

<sup>1</sup>This is one of the first post-WW2 references to an RAN interest in submarines.

<sup>2</sup>Field Marshal Sir William Slim was Governor General, 1952-59.

My wife has a fairly wide knowledge and experience of the women's organisations of Sydney and Melbourne and if she could help Lady Mountbatten in identifying and sorting people I hope Lady Mountbatten will not hesitate to ask her to do so. She would be delighted to help.

Ships of the Far East Fleet and Australian and NZ ships are to hold combined sea/air exercises in March and April and I intend to ask Alan Scott-Moncrieff if I may attend the analysis of the exercises in Singapore. I want also to return the visit he and his wife made to Australia in September/October last year. If he agrees with my visit then I may ask you to give me a passage to Singapore if you have room.

SEACDT.<sup>1</sup>

The Military Advisers Meeting in Melbourne went very well after a certain amount of haggling and I think all our 70-odd visitors went away satisfied with progress and the treatment meted out by the Host Country.

I was very taken with Felix Stump – a delightful man.<sup>2</sup>

Yours very sincerely,

Roy Dowling

77. *Dowling to Mountbatten*

[?] March 1956

Dear 1st Sea Lord,

In one of my previous letters I stated that I intended to send you some details of the RAN, tell you of our major problems and wind up with a series of questions about the Way Ahead. For various reasons I was unable to do this before you left England.

Enclosed is a list of RAN ships in Commission, in Reserve, and building, or approved to build. This year, or next year at the latest I shall have to make up my mind as to type of ship we should build out here

<sup>1</sup>The South East Asian Collective Defence Treaty (SEACDT) is better known as the Manila Treaty, which established the South East Asian Treaty Organisation (SEATO). See Peter Edwards, *Crises and Commitments: The Politics and Diplomacy of Australia's Involvement in Southeast Asian Conflicts 1948–1965* (Sydney, 1992), p. 153.

<sup>2</sup>Adm. Felix Stump was the US C.-in-C. Pacific from 1955 to 1958.

(Cockatoo and Williamstown Dockyards) to follow the Type 12 Frigates. We can build warships up to 6,000 tons, but certain equipment (chiefly electronic) and the latest conventional and guided weapons would have to be imported.

The time has also arrived when we must decide where we shall acquire ships and weapons – UK or USA. In the past we have depended entirely on UK as you well know, and for reasons that need not even be mentioned in this letter would prefer to keep it that way. We are fully conscious of the help always afforded by the Admiralty, of the fact that we have benefited from Admiralty research design production know-how and even detailed blue prints for every ship built or weapon manufactured in Australia. We have also deliberately and consistently worked on the principle of complete interchangeability with the RN in all respects, including officers, men, ship, equipment and logistics generally. We now find ourselves at the Crossroads solely because we very much doubt whether UK can provide us with what we want in the future. We have no wish to become Americans but there is a very strong belief in this country that the sensible action for Australians is to acquire war equipment from USA now. One very telling reason is of course that, certainly in global war our salvation in the Pacific will depend chiefly on the aid of that country. For that we are not less loyal members of Empire!

### Considerations.

1. For the next 5 years the Australian Defence vote will be not more than £190 million. This covers departments of Defence, Navy, Army, Airforce, Defence Production and Supply. The fighting services' share of this is less than £150 million at present. Ever increasing commitments such as Woomera, Malkara and Ammunition factories whittle down our vote. Increasing commitments such as ANZAM Strategic Reserve and gifts to SEATO countries have to be faced. The Australian pound is rapidly losing buying value within the country. This financial year Navy Allotment was about 30% of the Services' total – £48.8 million. Next year (having paid for *Melbourne* a tanker and the bulk of Naval Aircraft) we are to get £41 million. My guess is that for the following 5 years we can expect 42-45 million. At present the services are spending two thirds of their allotment on Maintenance alone.

2. Granted that the Purse tends to rule the Policy – the Navy of the future should be designed towards winning,

- (a) Cold War in SE Asia
- (b) Global war
- and (c) War with China.

It must also continue to be capable of carrying out its peace time role.

In (b) the RAN would probably operate under direct US Command, except in Australian home waters. That also means using a USN Fleet train which could not be expected to carry spares ammunition etc. suitable only for Australian ships.

3. In aircraft carriers Australia has the *Melbourne* operational and *Sydney* operational at D + 6 months (piston aircraft only). The total fleet air arm effort takes a high percentage of the Naval vote – alarmingly high. We cannot claim any real *offensive* power in our Fleet Air Arm and our Australian opponents know it. The answer of course is the tactical atomic weapon carried by Sea Venom or indeed any fighters capable of operating from the deck of a Light Fleet Carrier.<sup>1</sup> That is an answer to many problems, including the *Sverdlov* type cruiser.<sup>2</sup> As I see it the Australian Naval vote will not run to a large carrier replacement for *Melbourne*.

4. The *Darings*, the Q's (fast A/S frigates) and the type 12 Frigates are first class anti submarine ships but by the time the type 12's are completed we shall be very unhappy about their surface and surface to air weapons.<sup>3</sup>

5. The cruiser *Hobart* (ex *Apollo*) is in reserve after an extensive and costly refit. We don't know what to do with her but last year I decided that she may become a guided missile ship, as part of a Battle Group. Her hull and main engines are in first class condition and she has been completely re-wired (as a conventional cruiser).

6. Owing largely to the depth of water and geographical reasons our minesweeping problem and harbour defence problem are very different from those of UK. We have no Inshore or Coastal Minesweepers. We plan boom defences only for Sydney, Darwin, Port Kembla and Fremantle. We

<sup>1</sup>The idea of the RAN acquiring tactical nuclear weapons did not go very far. Whether it was an idea of Dowling's alone, one discussed within Navy Office, or dropped because of lack of Australian political or Allied support, is unknown.

<sup>2</sup>The Indonesian Navy acquired one *Sverdlov* heavy cruiser from the USSR in 1959.

<sup>3</sup>The four Type 12 Frigates (and two modified *Leander* class frigates) built in Australia eventually became known as the River Class Destroyer Escorts in RAN service.

have a lot of gear assembled for Manus but I have decided not to spend any more money on that enormous project.

7. It is most desirable that Australia should continue and possibly expand Naval Ship building. You will be aware that in the last war our ship repair effort was a noteworthy contribution to the War in the Pacific. It is possibly not wise however to launch a new building programme if we can't get guided weapons or if those we do get don't fit into the hulls, e.g. Admiralty hulls and US weapons.

8. The personnel ceiling was fixed in 1950 at 14,400 officers and men. Due largely to over employment in Australia we are now 1000 men short and will get progressively shorter after June of this year as the first 6 year men are now reaching the end of first engagement. The re-engagement rate for CPO's and PO's is very high but for Leading rate and below is minor.

9. The Shore tail, though not as bad as the RN's I think, is too large. If we could plan for a short global war only, the problem could be partly solved. We see Australia on the 'end of the limb'. If global war comes Australia may miss out on nuclear and atomic attack but will get no equipment or stores of any kind from anywhere until the broken back period has progressed.

10. I believe that even out here reserve ships should be disposed of (or allowed to deteriorate) if they cannot be got to sea by D + 2 months.

11. I hope the above considerations cover the RAN situation regarding material things. With a more up-to-date knowledge than I possess, of the probable RN Way Ahead – which you can give me – and with some more information regarding US and RN weapons time factors, I may be able to see daylight in RAN planning. I think the ANZUS and SEATO deliberations will shortly produce a fairly clear cut picture of requirements in the SEA area for the Australian forces in limited or cold war.

The QUESTIONS I shall put to you are something like these:–

1. Is it worth while planning to maintain an RAN Fleet Air Arm?
2. What would be the approximate cost of a new Light Fleet Carrier in 1965? Figure should include aircraft and weapons.

3. When will the tactical atomic weapon for use by aircraft from light fleet carriers be available from UK – if at all?
4. Do you visualise carrier decks for A/S helicopters in lieu of A/S aircraft?
5. Should the RAN in due course disband the Fleet Air Arm as such and concentrate on A/S ships?
6. Should the RAN in due course disband the FAA and be satisfied with
  - (a) A/S vessels, and
  - (b) Some submarines (A/S role).?
7. Should *Hobart* be converted to a guided weapon role? If so when will weapons be available from UK for a cruiser of her size?
8. When will guided weapons be available for *Darings* or Type 12 frigates – if at all?<sup>1</sup>
9. We are building 4 type 12 Frigates. Should we build more of these in preference to other types? *Darings* are to cost A£7.3 million each, type 12 over A£5 million each on present designs and estimates.
10. Have you firm ideas on what policy Australia should adopt for,
  - (a) Provision of Minesweepers?
  - (b) Defence of harbours?

We have of course our ANZAM commitment.

11. What are your views on readiness of ships in reserve? Is there any sense in keeping ships that cannot be brought forward under D + 2 months?
12. What is your plan of attack in reducing the Shore tail? Concentration of establishments is in your case dangerous because of modern air threat. It is also expensive in the initial stages.
13. Are you satisfied that a great deal more could not be done to make ships more habitable?
14. What are the intentions regarding the future of HMS *Simbang* for use by jet aircraft?
15. What are your views on the Naval Command Structure in SEA in global or limited war?

<sup>1</sup>The Seacat surface-to-air missile and the Ikara anti-submarine missile were both fitted to the RAN's River class destroyers escorts (Type 12 frigates); however, no guided weapons were ever fitted to the *Daring* class destroyers.

16. What is the Admiralty plan for a Naval base in SEA if Singapore becomes insecure or untenable for political reasons?

Yours sincerely,

Roy Dowling

## STATE OF THE ROYAL AUSTRALIAN NAVY

### SHIPS IN COMMISSION

<u>Ship</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>First Commissioned</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
<i>Sydney</i>	Light Fleet Carrier	16 Dec. '48	NS Training
<i>Melbourne</i>	Light Fleet Carrier	27 Oct. '55	Working-up – departed UK for Australia 15th March
<i>Tobruk</i>	Battle Class Destroyer	8 May 1950	Captain D.10 <sup>1</sup>
<i>Anzac</i>	Battle Class Des.	14 Mar. '51	
<i>Arunta</i>	Tribal Class Des.	30 Mar. '42	Paying off June '56
<i>Warramunga</i>	Tribal Class Des.	23 Nov. '42	
<i>Quadrant</i>	AS Frigate (Converted Fleet)	16 Nov. '42	Capt. Fox I <sup>2</sup> (Transferring to <i>Queenborough</i> in April.)
<i>Quickmatch</i>	AS Frigate (Converted Fleet)	14 Sept. '42	
<i>Queenborough</i>	AS Frigate (Converted Fleet)	30 Nov. '42	
<i>Shoalhaven</i>	AA Frigate (Mod. River)	2 May '46	Pay off. <sup>3</sup>
<i>Swan</i>	AS Frigate (Sloop)	21 Jan. '37	Cadet Training Ship
<i>Barcoo</i>	AS Frigate (Mod. River)	17 Jan. '44	Paying off late March 1956.
<i>Warrego</i>	AS Frigate (Sloop) <sup>4</sup>	28 Jan. '40	Employed Survey Service.
<i>Lachlan</i>	AS Frigate (Mod. River)	14 Feb. '45	On loan to RNZN for surveying duties.

<sup>1</sup>Captain D.10 is the Commander of the 10th Destroyer Flotilla.

<sup>2</sup>Capt. Fox I is the Commander of the 1st Anti-Submarine Frigate Flotilla: Fox stood for the letter 'F' in the phonetic alphabet then in use in the Royal Australian and Royal Navies.

<sup>3</sup>Mod. River is a modified River Class frigate. 'Pay off' refers to the decommissioning of a vessel, either for a period of repair and refitting (in between commissions), into the Reserve Fleet, or to be scrapped.

<sup>4</sup>A sloop is a type of general purpose escort vessel, usually with bias toward anti-submarine tasks, and smaller and slower than destroyers or frigates.

<u>Ship</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>First Commissioned</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
<i>Wagga</i>	OMS (Comprehensive) <sup>1</sup>	18 Dec. '42	Training in EA Area. <sup>2</sup>
<i>Cootamundra</i>	OMS (Comprehensive)	30 Sept. '43	Training in EA Area.
<i>Fremantle</i>	OMS (Limited)	24 Mar. '43	NS and reserve training in WA Area. <sup>3</sup>
<i>June</i>	OMS (Limited)	11 Apr. '44	NS and reserve training in WA Area.
<i>Gladstone</i>	OMS	22 May '43	Training in SEA area. <sup>4</sup> Paying off June, 1956.

## SHIPS IN RESERVE

<u>Ship</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>Future State</u>
<i>Hobart</i>	Cruiser	Sydney	E.18	Extended notice.
<i>Platypus</i>	N/N	Sydney	E.4	E.4
<i>Quiberon</i>	Destroyer	Sydney	Conver.	Conversion to AS Frigate—completion Dec. 1956.
<i>Quality</i>	Destroyer	Sydney	E.18	For disposal.
<i>Bataan</i>	Destroyer	Sydney	E.6	For disposal.
<i>Gascoyne</i>	Frigate (Mod. River)	Sydney	E.1	Policy: Present policy is to maintain the maximum number of ships at a state which will allow of commissioning and becoming operational within one month. In this respect the EFFECTIVE RESERVE will consist of 4 Frigates in 'D', 2 Frigates in E.1, 6 OMS in 'D' and 6 OMS in E.1 to E.4. The remaining frigates and OMS to be kept in E.4 class Commission.

<sup>1</sup>OMS is probably an abbreviation of Offshore Minesweeper (the *Bathurst* class vessels were originally designated AMS for Australian Minesweepers). The qualification of Comprehensive, Limited or Survey probably refers to the extent of modification the vessel had received; no qualification probably meant unmodified.

<sup>2</sup>E[ast] A[ustralian] Area – located off the south-east Australian coast, south of Sydney.

<sup>3</sup>NS – National Service (conscription). W[est] A[ustralian] Area – located off the southwest Australian coast, south of Fremantle.

<sup>4</sup>SEA – probably an abbreviation for South East Australia(n) in this case, but is also used in the RAN for South East Asia.

<u>Ship</u>	<u>Type</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>State</u>	<u>Future State</u>
<i>Hawkesbury</i>	AS Frig. (Mod. River)	Sydney	E.3	
<i>Macquarie</i>	AS Frig. (Mod. River)	Sydney	E.4	
<i>Shepparton</i>	OMS Survey	Sydney	E.4	
<i>Ballarat</i>	OMS Comprehensive	Sydney	E.2	
<i>Bunbury</i>	OMS Comprehensive	Sydney	E.2	
<i>Kapunda</i>	OMS Comprehensive	Sydney	E.1	
<i>Rockhampton</i>	OMS Comprehensive	Sydney	E.1	
<i>Strahan</i>	OMS Comprehensive	Sydney	E.2	
<i>Benalla</i>	OMS Survey <sup>1</sup>	Sydney	E.4	
<i>Dubbo</i>	OMS Comprehensive	Sydney	E.4	
<i>Gympie</i>	OMS Limited	Sydney	E.2	
<i>Bundaberg</i>	OMS Limited	Sydney	E.2	
<i>Murchison</i>	AA Frig. (Mod. River)	Sydney	E.4	
<i>Barwon</i>	AS Frig. (Mod. River)	Melbourne	E.4	
<i>Burdekin</i>	AS Frig. (Mod. River)	Melbourne	E.4	
<i>Diamantina</i>	AS Frig. (Mod. River)	Melbourne	E.4	
<i>Colac</i>	OMS Comprehensive	Melbourne	E.2	
<i>Condamine</i>	AA Frig. (Mod. River)	Sydney	Prep for reserve in 'D' class	
<i>Culgoa</i>	AA Frig. (Mod. River)	Melbourne	Prep for reserve in E.1.	
<i>Cowra</i>	OMS Comprehensive	Melbourne	Refitting and prep. From E.1.	
<i>Mildura</i>	OMS	Immobilised reserve training ship.		
<i>Castlemaine</i>	OMS	Immobilised engineering school training ship.		
<u>Ship</u>	<u>Type</u>			
<i>Deloraine</i>	OMS	Held for disposal.		
<i>Glenelg</i>	OMS	Held for disposal.		
<i>Horsham</i>	OMS	Held for disposal.		
<i>Katoomba</i>	OMS	Held for disposal.		
<i>Lithgow</i>	OMS	Held for disposal.		

<sup>1</sup>During WW2 *Benalla* conducted hydrographic surveys prior to amphibious operations and probably retained basic survey equipment.

<u>Ship</u>	<u>Type</u>	
<i>Parkes</i>	OMS	Held for disposal.
<i>Townsville</i>	OMS	Held for disposal.
<i>Latrobe</i>	OMS	Held for disposal.
<i>Bowen</i>	OMS	Held for disposal.

Notes 1. Class in Reserve

'D': Fully stored and available for operational service within 30 days.

'E': Followed by a figure indicates number of months notice. Ships are destored.

2. On completion of refits and conversions reserve ships in Melbourne will be transferred to Sydney.

### NEW CONSTRUCTION

<u>Ship</u>	<u>Laid Down</u>	<u>Completion Date</u>
<i>Voyager</i> (Daring No. 1)	10th October, 1949	December, 1956
<i>Vampire</i> (Daring No. 2)	1st July, 1952	September, 1958
<i>Vendetta</i> (Daring No. 3)	4th July, 1952	January, 1958
AS Frigates Type 12 RAN 1	April, 1955	March, 1960
AS Frigates Type 12 RAN 2	July, 1956	September, 1961
AS Frigates Type 12 RAN 3	October, 1954	March, 1960
AS Frigates Type 12 RAN 4	November, 1956	December, 1961

### 78. *Mountbatten to Dowling*

[? April 1956, Draft]<sup>1</sup>

I was astounded on arrival at Perth last night to hear from Walton,<sup>2</sup> the NOIC, that no item for visiting the naval activities in Western Australia have [*sic*] been included in my programme. I then and there arranged with him and the Government authorities to include a visit to Leeuwin after the Civic Reception in Fremantle. They were able to produce quite a large number of officers and men at a moment's notice, and I inspected them and addressed them, and then went round the Base and had a drink in the Wardroom. What an excellent Base it is, and what a pity it would have been if I had missed the chance of seeing it!

<sup>1</sup>This unaddressed and unsigned letter is located next to Mountbatten's thank you note of 14 April 1956 and is clearly related to his visit to Western Australia at the end of the trip to Australia. It is probably a draft of a letter to Dowling, and Dowling does refer to its contents in later letters.

<sup>2</sup>Capt. J. K. Walton, OBE, RAN. CO HMAS *Geraldton* and Senior Officer 22nd Minesweeping Flotilla, 1944-45; CO HMAS *Quickmatch*, 1945.

I also went round the offices of the NOIC very quickly.

The Government of Western Australia made a great point that I should look at Cockburn Sound, as they want to put up the idea of making it into a big naval fleet anchorage with dockyard facilities. There have been a lot of articles in the local Press about my being shown Cockburn Sound and they all suggest that it should take the place of Trincomalee, but I pointed out that the Admiralty were not directly involved in this, since it was a matter for the Australian Naval Board and the Commonwealth Government.

I promised, however, to write to you and send you the enclosed paper.<sup>1</sup>

Would you kindly let me know what the position is and perhaps let them know in Western Australia what your views are, as I very much doubt if the Admiralty would ever raise the funds to contribute towards this scheme, however pleased they might be if you did it.

### 79. *Mountbatten to Dowling*

14 April 1956

[Dear Roy ?]

Edwina and I were very sad when we said goodbye to you both at dawn at Canberra yesterday for we both felt we got to know you both so well during our hectic rush around Australia.

It is difficult to convey adequately my gratitude for the immense amount of trouble you took to arrange my visits to see so many units of the Royal Australian Navy; but I hope to be able to repay this in years ahead by a far greater knowledge of your problems and a greater appreciation of the RAN capabilities than I had before.

I spoke to the Governor-General about the position of the Chiefs of Staff as a whole which does not appear to be as high in Australia as our position is relatively in the UK.

I also spoke about the RAN which does not appear to enjoy as good a position in Australia as the RN does in the UK.

He said he would be glad to help in any way he could so please do not hesitate to go and see him with any suggestions for helping the RAN; and you can quote me as suggesting that you should see him.

I will get Charles Lambe<sup>2</sup> to answer your questions on personnel at length on return.

<sup>1</sup>A copy of the paper was not in the file.

<sup>2</sup>2nd Sea Lord.

I hope that not only you but as many of your Flag Officers as you can spare will come home to Exercise FAIRLEAD at Greenwich next April. This will also enable us to continue our discussions.

I am sorry we did not have a framed photograph left to give you as a souvenir but will send one after we get back to London.

[Yours sincerely ?]

[Mountbatten]

**80. Dowling to Mountbatten**

2 May 1956

Dear Dickie,

I don't know if either of you ever allow yourselves to feel weary but if so you undoubtedly had good reason on return to London. However one always finds the TOO HARD basket full on return – problems that only the boss can solve.

Your letter written on 14th April before leaving Perth was greatly appreciated. It was satisfying that you both saw so much and so many people and that apart from the failure to reach Brisbane on the first attempt all went so smoothly.

We too felt really sad in saying goodbye at Canberra. We tried to comfort ourselves with bacon and eggs in the RAAF Mess at 6.30 a.m. without success. I cheered up a bit while pulling Stephen Holmes' leg at breakfast.

You have both done us a world of good and the RAN has had a tremendous and much needed fillip.

I am sending you an album of photographs taken at Melbourne, Nowra, Sydney and Canberra and I hope it will serve to remind you of your latest Australian visit. There are not enough 'general views' of the places visited, but the photographs are good.

A few days ago I received a most friendly letter from Arleigh Burke in Washington.<sup>1</sup> I believe in passing on nice things. How right he was in saying:

<sup>1</sup>Adm. Arleigh Burke was the US Navy's Chief of Naval Operations, 1955–61. On retiring from the USN he was offered but declined the position of US Ambassador to Australia. See E. B. Potter, *Admiral Arleigh Burke: A Biography* (New York, 1990).

‘I know that you will have had a wonderful time with Dickie and Edwina Mountbatten, They are a truly charming couple. It is very seldom that I have enjoyed myself as much as I did with them during their all-too-short stay with us. He will put heart into the British Navy.’

Before leaving Canberra I had a talk with the Governor-General about the Chiefs of Staff and the position of the Services in Australia, but it doesn't seem possible to improve things quickly. All three Services have had a succession of Ministers who have insisted on using their Service to keep their own names in the Public eye. Although we break out occasionally there is a rule that only the Ministers or Minister for Defence may make a press statement about the Services. I risked my neck in 1954 to save the Fleet Air Arm.<sup>1</sup>

I believe that given sufficient seniority the 3 Service Chiefs' ranks should be lifted to Admiral, General and Air Chief Marshal. It is particularly absurd in the case of the Army where Wells is one of 3 active Lieutenant Generals.

You will recall expressing to me your surprise that the Australian Chiefs of Staff when honoured with Knighthood become Knight Commanders of the Order of the British Empire as distinct from the Order of the Bath.

So far as I am aware Australia has no allocation of KCBs in peace time and certainly there has been no such award to a Chief of Staff since the war. I confess that I do not understand why. However, you will realise that this is a delicate subject for us to raise and I for one would not dream of doing so officially – particularly as my own name may go forward this year or next. Both Wells and McCauley have received the KBE. We do think however that we are ‘missing out’ vis à vis our contemporaries in England and that the higher award would give us a lift in public esteem.

As I am on the subject of honours may I say that the allocation of CB's to Australia does not seem to be in step with the UK Services? The Australian fighting services are allowed 2 CB's annually and there is a total of 33 serving officers of Flag or corresponding rank. The RN alone receives 24 Bath awards each year for a Flag list of about 100.

As far as the RAN is concerned the CB problem has not risen before since both Farncomb and Collins received war time awards and mine was awarded (in competition with odd Major Generals and Air Vice Marshals) soon after I became CNS. However more RAN officers of Flag Rank are coming along and one would like to see them receive a CB roughly when

<sup>1</sup>Dowling's press statement occurred during an election campaign. See Minutes of the Meeting of the Naval Board, 16 June 1954, CRS A2585/2, 1951–54, AA.

their contemporaries in the RN are so honoured. I am hoping that Rear Admiral (E) Clark (3rd Naval Member) will be given a CB within the next 12 months. If this doesn't occur it will not be the RAN's 'turn' for a long time and Harries and Burrell will be long overdue by RN Standards. However I think the Army situation is even worse than ours.

I hope you don't mind my mentioning the CB problem but as you yourself mentioned the KCB situation I thought it reasonable to give you the complete picture. I think the other awards (CBE etc.) are in step with the UK Service, but I have not analysed them.

I shall write to you later about Cockburn Sound and Albany as possible future Naval bases. This subject has cropped up 2 or 3 times a year for as long as I can remember. I should have warned you. Of course press talk about possible loss of Singapore and probable loss of Ceylon bases, just before your visit to West Australia made you a Sitting Duck for the 'Westralians'.

I had every intention that you should visit the Naval Base at Leeuwin and I don't know why it was left out of the itinerary. You will recall that such a visit certainly was amongst my original suggestions. Thank you for your effort in squeezing it in.

I was glad to hear that SEASLUG behaved at Woomera and that the Monte Bello visit went off satisfactorily. I hope to be attending the next big bang at Monte Bello.

With best regards to you both from Jess and me, and again thank you for so much.

Very Sincerely Yours,

Roy Dowling

P.S. I must tell you that both broadcasts went down extremely well. Most of Australia seems to have listened and approved. HMAS *Melbourne* arrived at Melbourne today.

### 81. *Mountbatten to Dowling*

10 May 1956

My dear Roy,

You will remember that while I was in Sydney the question was raised of having one of the original guns of HMS *Victory* mounted on Garden Island.

I have now looked into the question and find that there are in fact only seven guns left which can possibly have been onboard HMS *Victory* at Trafalgar. These seven guns (all 32 pdrs.) are still in position on the lower gun deck. All the rest of the guns onboard HMS *Victory*, and those around her on the dockside, are either long 24 pdrs. dating from the eighteen forties or wooden replicas put onboard because of the weakening of the ship's timbers.

I am sure you will appreciate that when so much of HMS *Victory* has had to be renovated and replaced we are extremely loath to spare any of the seven original guns left to us.

I am sorry to have to send you such a disappointing answer.

Yours ever,

Dickie

## 82. *Mountbatten to Dowling*

31 May 1956

My dear Roy,

Thank you so much for your letter of the 2nd May, 1956, and all the kind things you say.

I have been into the question of KCBs, KBEs, etc. that we discussed. The ration of the Bath for the RN is 4 KCBs and 20 CBs per year.

We have a total of 107 Flag Officers of all branches, including General Officers, Royal Marines. You have 5 Flag Officers, so it would seem that over a period of 5 years, during which the RN would get 20 KCBs and 100 CBs, the RAN should have 1 KCB and 5 CBs.

If you agree I would propose having a preliminary discussion with the British Chiefs of Staff to see whether they would welcome my taking the matter up privately with the Governor General, who would have to discuss it with your Prime Minister.

I would also work out the comparable figures for the Order of the British Empire at the same time and prepare a proper brief on the whole Honours question, but I thought I would give you the results of my preliminary enquiries now, as I am just off in the Royal Yacht for the State Visit to Sweden.

We have the *Defender* and *Delight* and the new Canadian Frigate *St. Laurent* in the escort and will be making history in having a ship of a Commonwealth Navy doing a Royal Escort which does not include a visit

to her own country. Perhaps you would care to bear this precedent in mind.

Yours ever,

(signed) Dickie

83. *Dowling to Mountbatten*

11 June 1956

Dear Dickie,

With regard to the question of Cockburn Sound which you mentioned in the postscript to your letter dated 14th April, 1956, I have already been quoted in Western Australia as saying that I considered the maritime problem there had increased in importance.

I fully realise that the oil refinery at Kwinana<sup>1</sup> has drawn a very much increased tanker traffic in addition to the already considerable sea-borne activities in the area.

As to building a Naval Base in Cockburn Sound, it has long been recognised that we would require Naval facilities somewhere on the Western Australian coast in time of war. Planning at the moment is embarrassed by the lack of a Naval Wireless station and of course the local economy is not able to stand a great deal of development to provide large shipbuilding or ship repair facilities. The Royal Australian Navy could not stand the overhead which would be necessary to build up any major Naval facilities in the near future and the authorities in Western Australia have been so informed on many occasions.

It is a favourite theme of Members of the Federal Parliament representing Western Australia to ask what are the Naval intentions regarding the build up of facilities, particularly in Cockburn Sound, and we have always had to brief our Minister to reply that for the moment no funds are available.

I feel it is important to note that there is no civil demand for maritime shore activities such as ship repair, docking, &c., nor is this likely in peacetime owing to the high cost of labour in Australia. While this might equally apply to Sydney, Sydney is a terminal port where it is frequently convenient to accept the high cost of having ship repair work done.

<sup>1</sup>Kwinana is at the southern end of Cockburn Sound and about 15nm south of Perth.

Moreover the industrial potential at Sydney is good, while in Western Australia it is very small.

It may be that Cockburn Sound will become a protected Anchorage in war but I cannot see it as a Base in the near future. [pen script addition] I don't think we would ever use Albany as an anchorage.

Yours ever,

Roy Dowling.

#### 84. *Dowling to Mountbatten*

15 June 1956

Dear Dickie,

Many thanks for your quick reply to my letter about KCB's and CB's. The approach you suggest cannot be improved on and I shall be grateful for your making it. Subject to continued good behaviour it is almost certain that my name will be put forward for award of a 'K' in the new year. I believe the names are sent to Buckingham Palace from Australia some 3 or 4 months before the award date so if I am to benefit personally from a new allocation and be awarded a KCB instead of a KBE, time is getting short. If I am not the fortunate one the next on the list (as a new Chief of Staff) will probably be an Air Force officer.

The allocation of the classes of the Order of the British Empire to the Australian Armed Services (including Reserve Forces) is

KBE – Occasionally to a Chief of Staff

CBE – 6 annually

OBE – 12 annually

MBE – 24 annually.

They are apportioned in accordance with officer strengths in 1954 which were:—

	<u>CBE</u>		
Navy	RA to Captain	43	23%
Army	Major-Gen to Colonel	84	45%
Air	AVM to Group Capt.	60	32%

-----

<u>OBE</u>			
Navy	Commander to Lieut. Commander	414	22%
Army	Lieut.-Col to Major	931	50%
Air	Wing. Comm. to Squadron Leader	515	28%
		-----	
		1,860	

<u>MBE</u>			
Navy	Lieut. to Branch List	625	8%
Army	Captain to WO	4,648	64%
Air	Flight Lt. to WO	2,017	28%
		-----	
		7,290	

In Australia, receiving an honour in peace time and being hanged are both conditional upon the Government in office: the Labour Party has a strong aversion to honours (except for service against the enemies of the Commonwealth) and to capital punishment. So, anything you might do to increase our allocation of honours *could* be nullified by a change of Federal Government in Australia.

*St. Laurent* must indeed be a proud ship to be escorting the Royal Yacht to Sweden. I am hoping soon to be able to ask that consideration be given to establishing again regular exchanges of ships between the RN and the RAN. As you will recall there were several such exchanges before the last war.

I have been following the press reports of the State visit to Sweden with great interest – including damage to small craft!

Yours sincerely,

Roy.

### 85. *Mountbatten to Dowling*

12 July 1956

My dear Roy,

Thank you very much for making a Captain available for FAIRLEAD; this will be a great help.

I talked to your Prime Minister about FAIRLEAD and he said he would make it possible for you and other Flag Officers or appropriate senior officers to attend FAIRLEAD. He seemed to think it was an excellent idea and said that of course he would support the Conference, so all seems clear for quite a party to come from Australia in due course.

We had a brief talk on Cockburn Sound as the Prime Minister had been questioned about this just before leaving. I told him that at the request of the Western Australian Government I had visited Cockburn Sound and examined the charts. I had promised them to write to you expressing the view that it would be a perfectly suitable site for a naval base, but that it could never replace Ceylon, and that the Admiralty would not be able to provide funds for this though they would be quite happy to see you build a base there if you had the funds to spare (which I doubted).

I pointed out that the Prime Minister of Ceylon had indicated his readiness to let us keep our oil fuel and ammunition stocks etc, at Trincomalee although we would not be able to use the harbour as a permanent base.

I thought that you would like to know that your Prime Minister asked me what I thought of you, but I would not like to tell you what I said! However, it may interest you to know that your Prime Minister has a very high opinion of you indeed and would, I am sure, pay great attention to any view you may express.

This brought us naturally on to the subject of Knighthoods, KCBs etc, and unfortunately the Governor General had already raised the matter with the Prime Minister and it was Mr. Menzies' intention to raise the matter with the Secretary of State for Commonwealth Relations.

He asked for my views and any information I could give him in putting forward his case. I then had a talk with my colleagues on the Chiefs of Staff Committee and wrote your Prime Minister a letter, a copy of which I enclose for your information.<sup>1</sup> I am also writing to the Governor General to keep him in the picture and so it does look as though something actually will be done to put [the] matter right.

Yours ever,

Dickie

<sup>1</sup>Copy of the letter was not on the file.

86. *Dowling to Mountbatten*

25 July 1956

Dear Dickie,

First our thanks to you both for the photograph which is very much appreciated by the Dowling family. It is, as you say, rather dressed up, but we think it an excellent photograph nevertheless.

I had considerable difficulty in organising an Australian Captain for FAIRLEAD but realise how important it is that the RAN should be represented in the planning stage. I am sending Captain W.B.M. Marks, DSC, who is at present DOUW.<sup>1</sup> His place here will have to be filled for 8 months by his deputy, a Commander on the retired list, who I believe, can hold the fort. Marks is an ex 'G',<sup>2</sup> a big man, bursting with personality who has some experience in putting over the Monty type stage demonstration. I think he will fit the bill admirably. We know Pedder of course. Marks is due to relieve Morrison in Washington as Australian Naval Attache in mid August 1957 and I hope it will be possible for him to do an SOTC in UK between May and August.

If you want further assistance from the RAN I have no objection to your taking Commander Hamer<sup>3</sup> who is now completing a staff course in England and will then do 2 years exchange service with the RN. Hamer is a very clever young man. He was promoted on June 30th.

Your Jutland Day letter 1956 gives me a very broad outline of what FAIRLEAD is about but I, perhaps inevitably, have no further information. When Marks joins the planning staff he will be able to give me more details of the exercise. I suggest that in the meantime it would be beneficial if say, Pedder, could keep us in touch.

I realise that FAIRLEAD will be designed to mainly to portray Naval plans for Global war – which of course will include the South Pacific and SEA – but if my political masters firmly believe that Global war is so

<sup>1</sup>Capt. William Beresford Moffit Marks, RAN, was the Director of Naval Ordnance and Underwater Weapons (DOUW) during 1954–57. He subsequently served as the Naval Attache in Washington (1957–60), Director of Reserves (1960–61) and NOIC Western Australia (1962–67).

<sup>2</sup>By referring to Capt. Marks as an 'ex G', Dowling is indicating that Marks was a Gunnery Officer.

<sup>3</sup>Cdr (later Capt.) David James Hamer, RAN. He was subsequently the DNI (1962–63), CO HMAS *Vampire* (1963–64). He served in Navy Office during 1966–67 and retired in 1968. Shortly afterwards he was elected to Federal Parliament as the Member for Isaacs where he served until being defeated in the 1974 elections. He then became a Senator for Victoria. David Hamer was the brother of Sir Rupert Hamer, Premier of Victoria 1972–81, and the author of *Bomber and Battleships* (Sydney, 1998).

unlikely that Australia need not plan for it, their major interest will be in Cold and Limited war, in that order. I can make a water tight case for no reduction in the RAN (Seagoing) even if we think only in terms of Cold War in SEA. However, if FAIRLEAD could have a section dealing with employment of Navies in other than Global war, I am sure this will pay dividends and help the carrier policy.

I would like to attend the final session of FAIRLEAD, 29th April to 2nd May. I shall have opposition to bring senior RAN officers with me and I hope you will stress, or have already stressed, the importance of the attendance of maximum numbers. Also later I shall be asking if one or two officers on exchange service with the RN can be made available for one of the three presentations. I presume you will collect a section of 1957 IDC students also.<sup>1</sup>

Thank you for your letter of 12th July, just received. I understand that an official letter announcing FAIRLEAD has been received in the Defence Department but I have not yet seen it.

I think the subject of Cockburn Sound need not cause you any further thought or worry, particularly owing to the way matters regarding Trincomalee have progressed.

Thank you also for your kind interest and personal support in the matters of my relationship with our Prime Minister and in honours for the Australian services. As a matter of fact I thoroughly enjoy meeting the PM and we 'get along' very well. If he asks a question he gets a straight answer whether it is likely to be palatable or not!

Did I tell you that after FAIRLEAD and some time in UK to have a look if I may at Dartmouth, new accommodation at Devonport etc, I plan to visit Arleigh Burke and possibly de Wolfe?

Naval Staff here have put up a paper discussing future policy for aircraft carriers in the RAN – replacement for *Melbourne* in due course. The staff suggest some possibility of acquiring *Bulwark* on loan from the RN to fill the gap between *Melbourne* and whatever new type of ship is decided upon (possibly a GW ship with a flat top for A/S helicopters – I know not). Clearly there will be a gap to fill some time in the 1960's.

I do not know why you are not modernising *Bulwark*. What do you intend to do with her?

It seems to me that provided Australia paid for the modernisation (probably A£3 to 4 million) Admiralty might be pleased to lend us the ship rather than watch her rust. We would then of course have to buy the

<sup>1</sup>IDC was the abbreviated qualification for students who passed the course at the Imperial Defence College in London.

aircraft (DH110? and N113?) and spares. Even if this were done we would still not have a carrier capable of the attack role so I am uncertain also on this account.

If you tell me that you don't intend to modernise and commission *Bulwark* I shall have further enquiries made on staff level regarding probable costs, time factor, aircraft etc. My mind is far from made up as to our future requirements but it is not a happy thought that none of the more modern aircraft will be able to operate from *Melbourne*.

No doubt you know that Sir Fred Shedden retires in October and has been given his remaining 2 years on full pay to write his book.<sup>1</sup> We are pleased with the appointment of Hicks (from Air Department) as the new Secretary Department of Defence.<sup>2</sup> I have no clue however as to who will be Chairman of the Defence Committee after October.

Yours ever

Roy

### 87. *Mountbatten to Dowling*

2 August 1956

My dear Roy,

Thank you for your letter of the 25th July, 1956. I am taking up your point about the employment of Navies other than in Global war with Pedder, Director of FAIRLEAD at once.

I had a letter from Shedden and enclose a copy of my reply for your personal information.<sup>3</sup>

You say you have no clue as to who will be the Chairman after October, but I sincerely hope that you will be doing something about ensuring that Australia falls into line with every other country in having a serving officer as Chairman of the Chiefs of Staffs Committee.

<sup>1</sup>Sir Frederick Shedden's book never eventuated but the massive quantity of research materials gathered may be found at NAA, Canberra in A5954. See David Horner, *Defence Supremo. Sir Frederick Shedden and the Making of Australian Defence Policy* (Sydney, 2000).

<sup>2</sup>Edwin William Hicks; Secretary of the Department of Air, 1951–56; Secretary of the Department of Defence, 1956–68; Australian High Commissioner to New Zealand, 1968–71.

<sup>3</sup>Copy of this letter is not on the file.

I need hardly say that this is a strictly personal view as I have no business to make any suggestions about your set-up.

Yours ever,

Dickie

88. *Mountbatten to Dowling*

30 August 1956

My dear Roy,

Further to my letter of 2nd August, I have now been into the points you raised about FAIRLEAD and about the *Bulwark*. First let me say how grateful we are for your making Captain Marks available for FAIRLEAD. We know of him through operation MOSAIC; and from what you say he is clearly just the sort of man we want. His name has been noted for the SOTC in summer next year. Help from Commander Hamer will also be welcome and we will make the necessary arrangements here.

Pedder will certainly keep you in close touch with the planning for FAIRLEAD. It is by no means intended to base the exercise entirely on global war – in fact the emphasis will be laid equally on cold, limited and global war; and we are just about to invite the RAN officially, to undertake the limited war presentation in conjunction with the RNZN. I do hope you will be able to accept this.

I can assure you that we are filling TRIDENT HALL to capacity; and will of course look after your exchange officers and those at the IDC.

I am delighted that you are planning to call on Arleigh Burke and de Wolfe. I am sure this will be of the greatest value to both sides. I am hoping, of course, that de Wolfe will be able to come across for FAIRLEAD and Burke for FAIRWAY.

The situation about the *Bulwark* is not quite clear yet. It is probable that we would not have a requirement for her after 1961 and that she would then be available for you. The question of her modernisation is somewhat more problematical, as we cannot be certain of the design capacity and dockyard effort which will be available then. However, I do strongly recommend that you continue your investigations on the staff level, as I think she would be a real asset to you in the '60s.

As for aircraft, the ideal would be to go for P117s, NA39s and S58 helicopters. This would give you a supersonic day and night fighter with a limited all-weather capability, a long range strike aircraft and a good

A/S potential. If, however, this is more than you can do financially, then it might be as well to go for the DH110s and the S58s. Although the DH110 is primarily an all-weather fighter it will certainly have some value as a strike aircraft; and may be able to carry an atomic bomb. The design effort for the modernisation which the *Bulwark* would require to carry the DH110s would, of course, be much less than if she were required to operate P117s and/or NA39s.

I am looking forward to seeing the Governor General shortly during his period of leave over here; and intend to have a talk with him inter alia about the Honours and Awards situation.

Yours ever

Dickie

89. *Dowling to Mountbatten*

20 September 1956

Dear Dickie,

This is in reply to your letters of 23rd and 30th August, for which my thanks.

The subject of exchange of ships between our two Navies is one in which I am greatly interested. It has been constantly under review here for some time as it is appreciated that much is to be gained by such a move. It was the intention to approach Admiralty with proposals as soon as an exchange appeared practicable from our end. Unfortunately the shortages of ships, men and money, and the consequential difficulty experienced in meeting inescapable commitments have so far made this impossible and there does not appear to be any chance of this state improving in the near future, certainly not before 1958.

As you may know we are to commission our first *Daring*, HMAS *Voyager*, early next year and *Quiberon* on completion of conversion about October 1957. To achieve the latter we have been forced to plan to pay off *Quadrant* in April, the remaining two Q's will be with the Far East Fleet until about July and will then return to Australia for leave and refit.

We are certainly still keen to arrange an exchange as soon as possible and the conditions as outlined in your letter are fully acceptable. However, under present circumstances I regret we cannot play ball yet, I shall have the situation reviewed periodically and will let you know as soon as there

is any likelihood from our end of arranging an exchange. As suggested by you I would like our ships to come under the operational control of the C-in-C Mediterranean.

The results on the allocation of money in our Defence Vote recently were not by any means accurately reported. The Treasurer fixed the overall figure for Defence at £190m. again but this had to absorb considerable cost of living increases, pay increases and cost of materials as compared with the previous financial year. Also there were numerous sacred cows inserted such as £14½m. for an ammunition filling factory and £9½m. guided weapon project. By the time the fighting services got their bite there were about £143m. in the kitty. The Navy got £39m. or 26% of the services vote. This is by no means a bad proportion. Last year we had £48m. but this included a special grant of £6 or £7m. for that year only to assist in payment for HMAS *Melbourne*, our tanker and aircraft. Nevertheless a cut of about £3½m. on this years estimates has meant drastic action. I have proposed the entire cessation of National Service training, and other measures which are of value only in global war, such as stockpiling of stores and maintenance of and retention of our more ancient reserve ships. As you know NST for only six months is quite useless. However it may yet be a political decision to retain it. At least I can say there will be no effect on the fleet in being, and any effect on our ability to fight a limited war in SEA will be of a minor nature.

I am far from happy about the progress of exercise ALBATROSS. The UK High Commissioner has objected to any exercise off Hong Kong so a planned attack on the visiting ships has been cancelled. Our own External Affairs have now got themselves in a state of panic about the *beginning* of the exercise. My ships are to pass through Lombok Strait on the way to Singapore. I have now had to cancel all flying from a point 20 miles south of the strait until they get well into the China Sea. I have had endless trouble in launching this first SEATO exercise and I shall not be a bit surprised if some other reason is found to wreck its usefulness. All this is for your private ear only. There is nothing you can do about it. I am sorry to hear from C-in-C FES that *Newfoundland* will not now be able to take part in ALBATROSS, but I realise that it cannot be helped.

I think the RAN will be happy to undertake a limited war presentation (with the RNZN) at 'FAIRLEAD' but I await your official invitation. It will be necessary to brief Marks on this before he leaves Australia. I presume it will be limited war in SEA.

Thank you for your information about *Bulwark*. We shall continue our investigations on staff level. There is no immediate urgency but I was

particularly glad to have your views. I note that when discussing aircraft you did not suggest the possibilities of the N113, which might be better for us than the DH110. I could not contemplate undertaking the maintenance and training problems of two types of fighters in addition to helicopters in such a small front line strength.

I am keeping my fingers crossed, but I think our troubles with the Sea Venoms are now something of the past. The *Melbourne* has gone off quite happily to take part in ALBATROSS with Sea Venoms and Gannets both operating satisfactorily.

With reference to para 19 of your Armada Day letter, I do not think it practicable to incorporate the RANLO or any members of his staff as full members of Admiralty committees. They have a full time job as it is and I would much prefer that they continue to be merely associated with the relevant committees, working parties etc. It would be a different matter if I were permitted to increase my representation in London but there is no hope of this at present.

As mentioned in your letter of 30 August I do hope you had a chance to see Field Marshal Slim and mention the Honours and Awards situation. I do not know what he can do personally, but I do know he is keen to lift the status of Chiefs of Staff. I would think that the person who really should be approached is our Prime Minister.

I have had another look at the FAIRLEAD Summary of Planning paper dated 27 July 1956, and have discussed the Setting for Limited War centred on West New Guinea with Naval Staff and Captain Marks.

I wonder whether the SEATO aspect of trouble in the SEA area has been deliberately avoided? I believe it has. I am sure that at least USA and the Philippines would be closely interested in any Communist Indonesian effort to acquire Dutch New Guinea.<sup>1</sup> However, we shall play it as you wish.

I had hoped that FAIRLEAD would cover a Communist drive down through Indo China or through Thailand to the Kra peninsular (like the present SEATO limited war concepts recently approved by the SEATO Military Advisers) rather than an attack on Dutch New Guinea. The latter could be handled very easily with small forces. The Dutch New Guinea Terrain has to be seen to be believed – swamps, jungle and mountain peaks and certainly not ‘tank country’. The natives are pygmies and even more backward than Australian aborigines. I enclose

<sup>1</sup>Dutch New Guinea became a province of Indonesia in 1967 and was renamed Irian Jaya (subsequently Papua).

a photograph of a family group – without Mum, who is probably cultivating the yam patch.<sup>1</sup>

Yours sincerely,

Roy

[Photo attached]

### 90. *Dowling to Mountbatten*

16 October 1956

Dear Dickie,

Arleigh Burke has invited me to be the guest of the USN for two weeks and I have accepted. C-in-C Pac is sending a DC6 to Melbourne for me on Friday (19th October) from Pearl. I arrive in Washington a.m. 22nd and will spend a couple of days there – discussions with Arleigh, David Taylor Model Basin, Naval Academy before moving on. The tour will include New York, Naval Shipyard, Supply Centre Bayonne and UN Headquarters – Norfolk, visit *Forrestal* or *Saratoga* and USS *Boston*, Fleet training centre, Yorktown School of Mine Warfare – Key West, ASW School, Helicopter and LTA Squadron – Pensacola, San Diego, Naval training centre and Engineering School, Coronado amphib. base, Point Mugu, guided missiles, San Francisco Damage Control and Harbour defence, Pearl Harbour [*sic*].

I am taking Rear Admiral (E) Clark (Chief of Construction) and Commander Ramsay (D. of P. designate).<sup>2</sup> Needless to say I am looking forward to this trip immensely and will get much value out of it. The U.S. Naval Attache in Melbourne is being sent with me as escort. I hope to be back on the 11th November.

I have had a final talk with Captain Marks before his sailing for FAIRLEAD. He is well briefed on matters affecting his part of the

<sup>1</sup>The photo is of a small group of indigenous Papuans.

<sup>2</sup>RA (E) Charles Carr Clark, RAN, was the 3rd Naval Member (1953–59). He had previously served as the Gen. Manager of the Williamstown Dockyard (1945–50) and the Naval Engineer Officer, London (1950–53). Cdr (later Cdre Sir) James M. Ramsey was the Director of Plans (1956–58), CO HMAS *Creswell* (1959–61) and CO HMAS *Vendetta* (and Cdr of the 9th Destroyer Flotilla) (1961–62). He was subsequently ANRUK (1963–65), Dir. Gen. Fighting Equipment (1966–67) and NOIC Western Australia (1968–72). After his retirement in 1972, Ramsey was the Lt Gov. of Western Australia (1974–77) and the Gov. of Queensland (1977–85).

exercise. Fortunately we have just completed a paper, 'Basic Strategy for Defence of Australia', which he will have studied.

Exercise ALBATROSS has gone very well [*sic*] so far, though there was one ill informed ABC broadcast that the Australian Ships had been sent to Hong Kong to quell the riots.<sup>1</sup>

Reference my letter of 20th September: on reading it again, I fear my remarks on West New Guinea may be read as an effort to have the scene changed. Actually the setting will possibly be quite topical for say 1966, and I have no complaints about it. Our main strategic thought *now* is centred on the mainland of SEA. But who knows whether we shall have a foothold in SEA ten years hence?

Finally, with reference to your last letter dated 2nd October regarding marks of respect, the privilege of 'the pipe' has meant something in the past – it will mean slightly less after 1st January, 1957, but this I accept. It will mean still less if Civilian members receive it. Shortly, at this rate, it will not mean anything. Surely 'the pipe' is more a tradition and custom than a mark of respect. I feel that it is thoroughly inappropriate for any but a Naval officer in uniform to be received by a pipe (apart from Her Majesty). I can see no objection to a Civilian member of a Board whatever his dress being received by a bugle 'alert' or 'attention' or by the 'still' on the boatswain's call, but quite frankly I do not consider that he should be piped over the side. The only Civil members of the Board in Australia are the Minister and the Secretary of the Department.

My answers to your ultimate paragraph are:–

- (a) If you adopt this rule, a Civilian member of Board of Admiralty will also be piped on board HMA Ships, as a matter of courtesy.
- (b) I would expect that a Civilian member of the Australian Naval Board would be given the same Marks of respect as an Admiralty member when going onboard HM Ships.
- (c) I do not wish to adopt the change for Australian Civilians boarding HMA Ships but if you adopt it in the RN I would probably find it impossible to avoid adopting it here.
- (d) I emphatically dislike it as inappropriate. We uniformed people are gradually having all the glories and privileges stripped from us. I remember however once in the Mediterranean (in 1942 when the Merchant Navy Skippers were so grand), as a special privilege we piped them over the side. They were thrilled – but they were

<sup>1</sup>The ABC is the Australian Broadcasting Commission, the publicly owned radio (and now television) broadcaster in Australia.

old sea dogs going once again into battle. They were not civilians.

Sincerely Yours,

Roy

91. *Mountbatten to Dowling*

19 October 1956

My dear Roy,

I have delayed replying to your long and interesting letter of 20th September, until I had time to go into those questions you raised.

It is, of course, disappointing that it will not be possible to exchange ships for at least two years but I quite understand your difficulties. I am explaining the position to Grantham and I know that he will be as disappointed as we are.

Perhaps I did not give sufficient detail in my Armada Day newsletter about the proposal that members of Commonwealth Naval Liaison Staffs should be full members of Admiral Committees. I am not thinking, at any rate at this stage, in terms of full-time Standing Committees such as the Committee on Officer Structure; but rather of those Committees and Working Parties which meet perhaps once a week or once a month and whose members all have other Admiralty jobs. An example of this type of committee is one we are thinking of setting up to consider sub-specialisation of (X) officers. Most of the detailed work of these committees is carried out by Standing Groups or panels of the Committee. Occasions might well occur when a Commonwealth member might be unable to attend a particular meeting owing to pressure of work or other business (as of course now occurs with Admiralty members); but there would be no question of any increase in the size of your liaison staff here.

I have consulted the Fifth Sea Lord again about the question of the N113 and the DH110. Although the N113 has the greater strike potential the DH110 is a better all weather aircraft; and for that reason, if you are only to have one of the two, Bingley thinks you should undoubtedly have the DH110.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>RA (later Adm. Sir) Alexander Bingley was the Royal Navy's Deputy Chief of Naval Staff (Air) during 1954-57.

I will not go into your comments on FAIRLEAD as I have asked Pedder to write to you on this subject. I must, however, thank you very much for the photograph which caused considerable amusement here to all of us.

I had a talk with the Governor General, who is in full sympathy with our views on honours and awards and tells me that he is in close touch with the Prime Minister. I hope, therefore, that something will be achieved in the end.

I think I should also tell you in confidence that I strongly recommended to the Governor General that you should be promoted to the rank of full Admiral; as I am quite sure that the size of the RAN and the position which it holds fully justifies the Chief of the Naval Staff holding that rank.

Yours ever,

Dickie

## 92. *Dowling to Mountbatten*

12 April 1957

Dear Dickie,

This is probably my last letter before meeting you in London. I am due at London Airport at 1 p.m. on Thursday 25 April and intend to stay at The Basil Hotel. I have had several invitations to stay with people in and outside London, including one from Nancy Astor, but it would be much easier for all concerned if I based myself on a hotel. The Basil used to be comfortable, pleasant and quiet and it probably hasn't changed.

I have read the UK White Paper and your preview with the greatest interest. The White Paper and our Prime Minister's Statement on Defence (of which I trust you have a copy) were promulgated on the same day. Our, now enlarged, Defence Committee dished up the statement for the PM who added his own salad and dressing to the meat. My only complaint is his bit about the RAAF being the most mobile force. That was somewhat irritating and I shall tell him so in due course.

The major and immediate problem for the RAN is not finance, but manning. Our recruiting figure is reasonable but the re-enlistment figure especially for 6 year men is very low. A large number of our 6 year men are 'time expired' within the next 18 months and I can so far find no way of stopping the rot. The men, anyhow 90% of them, enjoy Naval life and if they were not married I am sure that we would have no re-engagement problems. You know our problems, which are very similar to those

pertaining to the RN and USN – separation from families, lack of houses, over employment, high wages and overtime payment in civvie street, and so on.

I am awaiting approval to re-start recruitment of ex RN ratings in UK and in view of your cut in numbers I have in mind the possibility of some direct transfer from RN to RAN. I hope to discuss the latter with the 2nd Sea Lord in London and shall not worry you with it.

In order to keep HMAS *Sydney* in commission and to use her for flying training I had to battle the Minister for Defence in the presence of full Cabinet. I won – but am now doubtful whether the manning situation will permit it after December this year. Maintenance of the present RAN contribution to the Commonwealth Strategic Reserve in SEA may also be at stake next year, due entirely to shortage of men. I repeat that it is not a matter of finance. Indeed I achieved 4 or 5 million more for next financial year than I got in the current year.

Although you stated the intention of using roughly current figures for planning the size and shape of the RN in 1965 for FAIRLEAD purposes, it would seem to me advisable, if not too late, to make some adjustment in the light of recent decisions. However, I suppose that Pedder has had a fairly accurate knowledge for some time of the probable shape of things to come and adjustment may not therefore be necessary.

We were delighted to have Dermot Boyle with us.<sup>1</sup> Everyone here seems to have liked him very much and what he had to tell us was of real value.

Thank you for your kind thought for my Sub-Lieutenant son. His sailing date was put forward suddenly and he did a pier head jump. He is now with us in Melbourne on leave.

I am awaiting my schedule from RANLO Australia House for my 12 days in England for Look-see, after FAIRLEAD. I have also written to my old friends Guy Grantham and Mark Pizey as I intend to visit both Devonport and Portsmouth.

Yours ever

Roy

p.s. On return journey from England I am spending a day with the Pakistan Navy at Karachi and 48 hours at Singapore. Originally I had intended to return via USA and have a word with Arleigh Burke and the Canadians.

<sup>1</sup>Probably Marshal of the RAF Sir Dermot Boyle, Chief of the (British) Air Staff 1956–59.

## Part 6

## Burrell and Lambe

93. *Burrell to Lambe*

28 May 1959

Firstly please accept my warmest congratulations and best wishes on assuming your new appointment.

Thank you very much for your letter of greeting on taking over. I am delighted to hear that you will be visiting us next year and can assure you of a very warm welcome. I had hoped to be able to write and tell you that I would be visiting the United Kingdom in the very near future but 'the best laid-plans etc.' and it now appears most improbable that I shall get away before August. I note that you are planning to visit your Home Commands in the late summer months so I shall try and let you know my firm dates as soon as possible as my visit is, of course, primarily to see you.

My difficulty is that the starting point of all our Composition of Forces plans etc. for the future must be backed by a 'Strategic Basis of Defence Policy'. This paper has been sighted by Cabinet but they have not yet made any decisions. Until some progress is made in this direction, the 'Way Ahead' will not get a hearing. I have got down to a ten year plan and have hopes that the 1959/60 Estimates and the broad outline for progress in 60/61 and 61/62 will fit into that long range picture. In the final count, it is money that matters and as you are well aware new equipment is very expensive. If the Government is not prepared to increase the Defence Vote, my only chance is to succeed in a bid for a larger proportion for Navy than at present and even that would not go very far.

I had hoped that this dilemma would be solved before our PM left on his overseas trip but that has not been practicable and it now seems that all decisions must await his return in early July. With our Sea-Venoms and Gannets reaching the end of their Front Line Life in 1963 you will appreciate that some early decisions are required this year if –

- (a) There is not to be a big gap in the change over period, or
- (b) The FAA is not to go out of business.

(a) is of course highly undesirable and (b) would be against all modern thought and reduce the RAN to a DD/FF and probably S/M Navy.<sup>1</sup>

Our COS Committee agrees generally that the FAA should continue after 1963/64 provided a suitable replacement carrier and aircraft are available. Our first task therefore is to find an aircraft with fighter/strike capabilities to meet our requirement and which we can afford.

From a very careful survey it appears that there is no likelihood of a United Kingdom aircraft to suit our needs. The Northrop N-156 might be satisfactory (except for price) but we have grave doubts that a Navalised Version will ever take the air.<sup>2</sup> We are interested in the ETENDARD IVM and hope to send a team overseas in the near future to have a good look at it.

If we find the aircraft we will then have to look for the carrier to put it in. *Melbourne* won't take it. I know my predecessor was very interested in *Albion* but you will agree that she is far from being a new ship and would need very costly modernisation to meet our requirements; and then she might well be marginal as far as her operational capabilities are concerned. A new carrier would be beyond us financially and I must therefore look at any other alternatives offering (possibly an *Essex* from USA, but, according to CNO, these are getting very worn out).<sup>3</sup>

After Cabinet deliberations, I plan to leave here early in August to visit you with the objects of –

- (a) putting you into the broad picture
- (b) discussing replacement aircraft and carriers and re-equipment generally
- (c) seeing what is in your shop window in regard to GW Destroyers and fitting a medium range GW system in *Darings*
- (d) discussing submarines generally and looking at a *Porpoise* S/M<sup>4</sup>
- (e) discussing mine clearance techniques with the possibility of constructing IMS in Australia and the early purchase of a small number of CMS from you.

<sup>1</sup>DD is an abbreviation for destroyer, FF for frigate.

<sup>2</sup>The Northrop N-156 became the F-5 Tiger II/Freedom Fighter which was widely exported from the US but was never developed as a carrier-based fighter.

<sup>3</sup>24 *Essex* class carriers were built for the US Navy during the Second World War. They were 80m longer and approximately twice the displacement of the *Majestic* class light fleet carriers and therefore had the potential to operate larger and more modern aircraft with less substantial modification.

<sup>4</sup>The *Porpoise* class submarines were the first class of submarines to be built for the RN after the Second World War and benefited considerably from British examination of the German Type XXI U-Boats. The *Oberon* class eventually purchased by Australia were a development of the *Porpoise* class.

If the Government does not see its way clear to provide sufficient money to re-equip and maintain the FAA, the emphasis of the RAN must change. In any event my thoughts are towards the S/M but with no FAA, the submarine would have much greater significance. I would of course bring a small team with me and I hope to return via the USA taking 'a couple' of months altogether.

Our PM has not yet been made aware of the re-equipment problems of any of our services and consequently I have not been given the opportunity of pressing any part of the RAN's case with him. However, if you have a chance to talk to him during his visit perhaps you might care to fire a few rockets in our favour such as –

- (a) Australia's need for a strong Navy
- (b) The need for another FAA generation or, if another FAA generation is beyond Australia's means or impracticable for other reasons the increased urgency for the RAN to obtain GW ships and submarines
- (c) The vast potential of submarine forces in future warfare and the desirability of the RAN getting into the submarine business as soon as possible.

I am very glad to see that you intend to continue your periodic newsletters. We find them great value.

With all good wishes,

**94. *Signal, Admiralty to Naval Board***

18 September 1959

181807Z

Personal for CNS from First Sea Lord

Have just completed a detailed discussion with Admiralty Staff, at which Mackinnon<sup>1</sup> was present, [about ?] your 170103.<sup>2</sup>

I am very sympathetic to your views on the strategic value of RAN Fleet Air Arm and on the priorities for roles of carriers outlined in your

<sup>1</sup>Capt. Neil Alexander Mackinnon, RAN, was the DNI (1949–52). Afterwards he was CO HMS *Apollo* (1952–54), completed the IDC Course (1954), CO HMAS *Cerberus* and Cdre Superintendent of Training (1955–56), and ANRUK (1957–59).

<sup>2</sup>The signal DTG 170103 referred to was not found on the file.

para 4. On the other hand your questions cannot easily be answered owing to predicament Admiralty is in at present regarding future of *Centaur* and *Albion*.

I will send you a fuller signal early next week.

95. *Signal, Admiralty to Naval Board*

22 September 1959

221453Z

Personal for CNS from First Sea Lord.

Your 170103 to RANLO and further to my 181807.

By present Admiralty plans based on current Defence Policy our own carrier requirements are as follows:-

- (a) *Centaur* will be required in the Active Fleet until *Eagle's* modernization is completed, at present forecast for 1963 at earliest. Thereafter she will be needed as fifth ship to support 3 active Carriers in the Fleet;
- (b) *Albion* is needed in the Active Fleet until the end of 1960. Thereafter she is earmarked for conversion to a second Command Carrier using plans already extant for *Bulwark*. Apart from providing two identical Commando Carriers this plan obviates need for any further design effort.

2. In addition I always have at the back of my mind the possibility that in 2 or 3 years' time Defence Policy may demand 4 active Carriers in our Fleet instead of 3. This would really require 6 ships and in this case *Albion* would be needed for conversion to Standard C instead of to the Commando role. The requirement for an extra RN Carrier is however not so likely to arise if the RAN can offer us the support of 1 when needed, but this may not always be politically practicable except in the SEATO or ANZAM concept.

3. In view of the foregoing, the best I could hope to do to help you would be to recommend the transfer of *Albion* to RAN for conversion to Standard C when she completes her present active duty in, say, early 1961. The start of such conversion is, however, dependent upon the extent of *Eagle's* modernization which is now under consideration; it is unlikely to be

possible in a Royal Yard before 1963 at the earliest; it will take about 2 years and would cost you not less than £6M. which is what *Centaur*'s conversion cost. Conversion in a private yard could start earlier and length and cost of conversion would depend upon the extent of the work to be done. Private conversion would present more difficulty to us because it involves more drawings at a time when we do not have the effort available.

4. If the UK Government were to approve this transfer I think we would have to ask you to let us have *Melbourne* back, probably early in 1963, in order to convert her for our own use in the Commando role instead of *Albion*. We have no other ship suitable with adequate hull life.

5. All this is tentative, of course, but I am very ready to consider a scheme on these lines. There are the following major difficulties:—

- (a) it would deprive us of the ability to expand our Carrier force, see para. 2 above,
- (b) I feel we would have a job to persuade our financiers to swap *Melbourne* for *Albion* without any charge.

6. In view of what I say in my immediately following signal would you like me to see what we could do to help to extend *Melbourne*'s life in her present form by investigating the availability of present-day aircraft for some more years and helicopters.

**96. Signal, Admiralty to Naval Board**

22 September 1959

221454Z

Personal for CNS from First Sea Lord.

Further to my 221453Z and your 170103Z para 5.

I have no doubt of the great strategic value of an RAN Carrier to ANZAM and SEATO. Moreover an Australian Carrier joining an RN Carrier more than doubles the operational value of either of our carriers singly. I am also sure that the priorities and roles in your para 4 are right.

2. I am, however, much less sure that you are wise to go for the more sophisticated aircraft with all that it entails in money, extra manpower

(particularly electronic ratings) and complications. We in the RN are very conscious that we are paying a fantastically high price in all the above fields for a very small end result and are in danger of pricing ourselves out of business.

3. I would strongly advise a searching examination of whether you could not meet your needs for the next 5–10 years by some means which does not tie so much higher a proportion of your budget to such a narrow field. Might it not be wiser to skip the next step and wait until we can foresee the next stage, which might be VTOL.

4. This is a subject which cannot be adequately covered by Signal or letter and, unless you can come here before you become committed, I would like to send Admiral Couchman, the FO Air (Home) out at once to you to ensure that all our recent experience is available to you before you decide. He is VCNS designate and, as such, I anyway hope he can visit you before he takes up his job. Would it help if he were to come, say, in 14 days from now? Nobody knows more of these problems than he does.

97. *Burrell to Lambe*

13 October 1959

Many thanks for your kind letter of 15th September.<sup>1</sup> You mention an Admiralty Staff Study on the shape and size of the RAN. Please be assured it has not embarrassed me in the slightest. I heard a buzz about it but did not give it any weight – in fact I'm surprised that you should know that it had got to me. My unshaken belief is that a FAA is essential on military grounds. If it has to be disbanded on unavailability or financial grounds, I will go quietly.

My recommendation to the Minister for Defence is that I be given approval in principle to establish a S/M Service and to withhold decisions on FAA, Minesweepers, SAGW Destroyers until my return from overseas when I would be in a better position regarding availability, costs, timing etc.

I have been asked – if FAA goes, what are my proposals for a reshaped Navy? My ten year plan is quite clear but beyond the purse. With a limited vote it would be futile for me to give an answer at this stage. I badly need hard facts on hardware.

<sup>1</sup>Letter not located on this file.

Thank you for your patience with me – at present I despair of giving an accurate forecast of a date for Cabinet to consider the composition of the Forces and my proposed fact-finding visit to follow.

98. *Dowling to First Lord*

30 November 1959

Extract from letter from Vice-Admiral  
Sir Roy Dowling, KBE, CB, DSO, RAN  
to First Lord

As you are aware, the RAN is very close indeed to the RN. Long may it remain so.<sup>1</sup> There have been pressures in the past for us to be more independent, or dependent more on the USN. All such pressures have been from outside the Service and all have been strongly and successfully resisted from within the Service.

You have possibly seen at least a précis of the Government decisions announced last Thursday by our Minister of Defence. We are sad indeed that the FAA must fade out in 1963/64 but even if there were a replacement carrier available (*Centaur* or *Albion*) for us to take over I very much doubt that we could have continued.

Burrell will be visiting UK before the end of the year and will I hope see you. The RAN *must* start a Submarine Service soon and of course there are other requirements, which I shall leave to Burrell to discuss. It will be an interesting trip for him. From now on the Defence Vote will not be pegged on the m£190 mark thank heavens.

99. *Lambe to Burrell*

3 December 1959

Since the press release of the decision which your Government has recently taken on future Australian defence policy, Mackinnon has been in and told me all he knows and we have talked over the future. I feel sure you must have been having a very difficult time and I only wish that I could have been of more help to you in fighting your battles than I was.

I expect Mackinnon will have reported to you our conversation. We discussed what was really meant by the closing down of the RAN Fleet

<sup>1</sup>At the time this letter was written Dowling was the Chairman of the Chiefs of Staff Committee.

Air Arm. I could not help feeling that there might well be a good case for keeping *Melbourne* going for a good many years yet, even if it did give up replacing your fixed wing aircraft. It seemed to me that she might well be useful to cooperate with your Army in the Commando Carrier role and, perhaps even more important, she might combine this with the role of an A/S carrier. If, as I gather, you are really thinking seriously of going in for a submarine arm of your own, I should have thought that A/S helicopters in the RAN were essential. We certainly feel that the A/S helicopter is a key member of the anti-submarine team and maybe this might provide a future, albeit restricted, for your Fleet Air Arm.

The other point which worries me particularly, is the loss of so much ‘know how’ which you have built up on the Fleet Air Arm side of your Navy. I keep turning over in my mind all sorts of possible ways in which we could save some of this for the benefit of the Commonwealth as a whole. It seems to me terrible to throw it all away; and I have been constantly wondering whether you have any plans for saving something in this frightfully valuable field.

I gather you will be having a visit from Gerald Gladstone<sup>1</sup> in the near future and I am sure he would be ready to expand on these matters if you want. I shall be awfully interested to hear a little more detail when you have time to see how these things work out. The RAN is so important to us that I am sure you will forgive me if I am poking my nose in.

## List of Documents

The documents used may all be found in The National Archives.

### Part 1

1. Hamilton to Cunningham	3 February 1947	ADM 205/68
2. Hamilton to Cunningham	18 March 1947	ADM 205/68
3. Cunningham to Hamilton	30 May 1947	ADM 205/68
4. Hamilton to Cunningham	17 June 1947	ADM 205/68
5. Admiralty to Naval Board	2 July 1947	ADM 205/69
6. Hamilton to Cunningham	11 July 1947	ADM 205/69
7. Hamilton memorandum	3 July 1947	ADM 205/69
8. Cunningham to Hamilton	16 July 1947	ADM 205/68
9. Hamilton to Cunningham	27 November 1947	ADM 205/69

<sup>1</sup>Adm. Sir Gerald V. Gladstone was the RN C.-in-C. Far East Station (1957–60). He had previously been FO 5th Cruiser Squadron & 2nd in command Far East Station (1953–55).

10.	Australian Government to Commonwealth Relations Office	3 December 1947	ADM 205/69
11.	Naval Board to Admiralty	4 December 1947	ADM 205/69
12.	Admiralty to Naval Board	9 December 1947	ADM 205/69

**Part 2**

13.	Collins to Cunningham	23 April 1948	ADM 205/69
14.	Cunningham to Collins	28 May 1948	ADM 205/69

**Part 3**

15.	Collins to Fraser	16 July 1948	ADM 205/69
16.	Fraser to Collins	14 August 1948	ADM 205/69
17.	Collins to Fraser	7 September 1948	ADM 205/69
18.	Fraser to Collins	20 September 1948	ADM 205/69
19.	Collins to Fraser	20 December 1948	ADM 205/69
20.	Fraser to Collins	14 January 1949	ADM 205/69
21.	Collins to Fraser	5 August 1949	ADM 205/72
22.	Collins to Fraser	5 August 1949	ADM 205/72
23.	Fraser to Collins	5 September 1949	ADM 205/72
24.	Fraser to Collins	5 September 1949	ADM 205/72
25.	Fraser to Collins	6 January 1950	ADM 205/74
26.	Collins to Fraser	26 January 1950	ADM 205/74
27.	Collins to Fraser	27 January 1950	ADM 205/74
28.	Admiralty to Naval Board	10 February 1950	ADM 205/74
29.	Collins to Fraser	27 March 1950	ADM 205/74
30.	Fraser to Collins	27 April 1950	ADM 205/74
31.	Collins to Fraser	17 July 1950	ADM 205/74
32.	Fraser to Collins	12 September 1950	ADM 205/74
33.	Collins to Fraser	6 October 1950	ADM 205/74
34.	Fraser to Collins	13 December 1950	ADM 205/74
35.	Collins to Fraser	8 March 1951	ADM 205/76
36.	Collins to Fraser	2 April 1951	ADM 205/76
37.	Fraser to Collins	3 April 1951	ADM 205/76
38.	Fraser to Collins	20 April 1951	ADM 205/76
39.	Fraser to Collins	11 May 1951	ADM 205/76
40.	Lloyd to Fraser	6 June 1951	ADM 205/76
41.	Fraser to Lloyd	22 June 1951	ADM 205/76
42.	Collins to Fraser	5 July 1951	ADM 205/76
43.	Creasy to Collins	23 August 1951	ADM 205/76
44.	Collins to Creasy	2 October 1951	ADM 205/76

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45.	Collins to McGrigor	20 November 1951	ADM 205/76
46.	McGrigor to Collins	29 November 1951	ADM 205/76
47.	Collins to McGrigor	8 February 1952	ADM 205/86
48.	McGrigor to Collins	7 March 1952	ADM 205/86
49.	Collins to McGrigor	1 April 1952	ADM 205/88
50.	McGrigor to Collins	22 April 1952	ADM 205/86
51.	Collins to McGrigor	14 May 1952	ADM 205/86
52.	Collins to McGrigor	28 October 1952	ADM 205/86
53.	Collins to McGrigor	28 January 1953	ADM 205/88
54.	McGrigor to Collins	16 February 1953	ADM 205/88
55.	Naval Board to Admiralty	4 March 1953	ADM 205/88
56.	Admiralty to Naval Board	18 March 1953	ADM 205/88
57.	Naval Board to Admiralty	24 March 1953	ADM 205/88
58.	Collins to McGrigor	27 May 1953	ADM 205/88
59.	McGrigor to Collins	3 July 1953	ADM 205/88
60.	Collins to McGrigor	20 July 1953	ADM 205/88
61.	McGrigor to Collins	31 July 1953	ADM 205/88
62.	Naval Board to Admiralty	4 September 1953	ADM 205/88
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65.	Collins to McGrigor	27 October 1953	ADM 205/88
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67.	Collins to McGrigor	6 August 1954	ADM 205/105
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69.	McGrigor to Collins	29 October 1954	ADM 205/105
70.	Collins to McGrigor	29 October 1954	ADM 205/105
71.	McGrigor to Collins	3 December 1954	ADM 205/105
72.	Collins to McGrigor	27 January 1955	ADM 205/105

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73.	Mountbatten to Dowling	18 April 1955	ADM 205/105
74.	Dowling to Mountbatten	27 May 1955	ADM 205/105
75.	Mountbatten to Dowling (and other Commonwealth Chiefs of Naval Staff)	19 August 1955	ADM 205/105
76.	Dowling to Mountbatten	24 January 1956	ADM 205/110
77.	Dowling to Mountbatten	[?] March 1956	ADM 205/110
78.	Mountbatten to Dowling	[? April 1956]	ADM 205/110
79.	Mountbatten to Dowling	14 April 1956	ADM 205/110
80.	Dowling to Mountbatten	2 May 1956	ADM 205/110
81.	Mountbatten to Dowling	10 May 1956	ADM 205/110

82.	Mountbatten to Dowling	31 May 1956	ADM 205/110
83.	Dowling to Mountbatten	11 June 1956	ADM 205/110
84.	Dowling to Mountbatten	15 June 1956	ADM 205/110
85.	Mountbatten to Dowling	12 July 1956	ADM 205/110
86.	Dowling to Mountbatten	25 July 1956	ADM 205/110
87.	Mountbatten to Dowling	2 August 1956	ADM 205/110
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91.	Mountbatten to Dowling	19 October 1956	ADM 205/110
92.	Dowling to Mountbatten	12 April 1957	ADM 205/169

### Part 6

93.	Burrell to Lambe	28 May 1959	ADM 1/38286
94.	Admiralty to Naval Board	18 September 1959	ADM 1/38286
95.	Admiralty to Naval Board	22 September 1959	ADM 1/38286
96.	Admiralty to Naval Board	22 September 1959	ADM 1/38286
97.	Burrell to Lambe	13 October 1959	ADM 1/38286
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Relation of the voyage to Cadiz, 1596, by Sir William Slyngisbie, edited  
by Julian S. Corbett.

Glorious England: a relation of the battle of Quiberon Bay. From the  
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Journals of Henry Duncan, Captain, Royal Navy (in the *Eagle*, *Medea*,  
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Extracts from the papers of Samuel, First Viscount Hood.

Letters of the Hon. William Cathcart, Captain, Royal Navy.

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*VOLUME II*, edited by Professor Sir John Laughton  
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Voyage of the *Barbara* to Brazil, anno 1540, edited by R.G. Marsden.

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A narrative of the battle of Santa Cruz, written by Sir Richard Stayner, Rear-admiral of the Fleet, edited by Professor C.H. Firth.

Extracts from a Commissioner's note book, annis 1691–1694, comprising:

- I. Scheme of stations for cruisers
- II. Explanations of some Dockyard terms
- III. Reflections on our naval strength
- IV. The fight with the French, anno 1692; written by the Earl of Nottingham
- V. The attempt on Brest.

The journal of M. de Lage de Cueilly, Captain in the Spanish Navy, translated from the French by Lieutenant T.G. Carter, RN.

Sale of Dead Man's effects on board H.M. Ship *Gloucester*, 1750.

The Mutiny at the Nore: letter from James Watson to Admiral Robert Digby.

From the letter-books of Sir Charles Thompson, Bart., Vice-admiral, selected and edited by Admiral Sir T. Sturges Jackson, K.C.V.O., with sections on:

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Memoirs of George Pringle, Esq., Captain, Royal Navy, 1759–1809, written by himself.

The Pedigree of the Naval Duncans.

Operations in the Scheldt: letter from Captain C.W. Boys to his brother.

Frustration of the plan for the escape of Napoleon Bonaparte from Bordeaux in July 1815.

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The action between H.M.S. *Lyon* and the *Elisabeth*, July 1745, by H.H. Brindley.

The Channel Fleet in 1779 – letters of Benjamin Thompson to Lord George Germain.

The engagement between H.M.S. *Brunswick* and *Le Vengeur*, 1st June 1794.

Letters of Lord Nelson, 1804–5.

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Two letters from Blake to Mountagu, 1656–7, edited by G.E. Manwaring.

Instructions to Captain Cook for his three voyages.

The bombardment of Copenhagen, 1807 – journal of Surgeon Charles Chambers of H.M. Fireship *Prometheus*.

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The reminiscences of Lieutenant Malmsköld, 1756–1763, translated and edited by Dr. R.C. Anderson.

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The log of the *Guardian*, 1789–1790, edited from the journal of Captain Riou by Ludovic Kennedy.

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Letters of Lord St. Vincent to Thomas Grenville, 1806–1807, edited by Hardin Craig, Jnr.

*VOLUME V*, edited by Dr. N.A.M. Rodger  
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Edmund Dummer's 'Account of the General Progress and Advancement of His Majesty's New Dock and Yard at Plymouth', December 1694, edited by Michael Duffy.

Letters from Vice-Admiral Lord Collingwood, 1794–1809, edited by Captain C.H.H. Owen, RN.

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